LIVING STARS / F6

Kuh's Hacienda Isabela: A farm, retreat house for praying, fasting, seminars

SPORTS / A24

Sharapova, Williams forge Australian Open final showdown

BUSINESS FRIDAY / B2-1

What active senior citizens, affluent executives and masses will buy this year

ACROSS / A13

DOJ ordered cases against Chinese poachers dropped

Virgin Komodo now pa and ma to 5 dragons

CHESTER, ENGLAND—FLORA, A KOMODO dragon who has never mated or even mixed with a male, has become a mother and father to a clutch of babies following her "immaculate conception" that stunned scientists, bosses at a British zoo announced on Wednesday.

The female Komodo, a badly endangered giant lizard, astounded keepers at Chester Zoo in

VIRGIN/ A14

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, January 26, 2007 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 49 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Iloilo attack 'excessive' but cops to get awards

By TJ Burgonio

BEST OVER ACTING AWARD NA DIN!

EXCESSIVE, YES, BUT awards are in order.

Policemen who stormed the Iloilo provincial capitol may have committed "excesses" in the operation, but ac-

ILOILO/ A15

Erap camp hits Ang for hiding plea deal

Saguisag says notice of agreement part of due process

By Norman Bordadora

THE CAMP OF DEposed President Joseph Estrada yesterday slammed Charlie "Atong" Ang for his failure to give Estrada's defense lawyers a copy of his plea bargain agreement with state prosecutors before he submitted it to the Sandigabayan.

"The hidden agenda is disgraceful as the intent was not even to give us a copy of an important document that may affect our client. What law authorizes such posture?" said Rene Saguisag, Estrada's lead defense counsel.

The agreement, if approved by the Sandiganbayan, would allow Ang to enter a plea of guilty for the lesser offense of bribery, which carries a six-year prison term, and avoid a possible sentence of 40 years for plunder.

In exchange, Ang would assist in the prosecution of cases "in which he has personal knowledge."

In the plea bargain he submitted to the Sandiganbayan on Wednesday, Ang acknowledged that he and Estrada conspired in 1998 to "divert" P130 million in

ERAP/ A15

THE ATONG ANG FAMILY HOME: Ang has offered his own residence at 18 Manansala St., Corinthian Gardens, Quezon City, to pay the government for the P25-million kickback he allegedly took from the P130-million tobacco excise tax earmarked for Ilocos Sur. Already, the house has been the subject of a writ of attachment issued by the Sandiganbayan where Ang is a co-accused in the Estrada plunder trial. RAFFY LERMA

GMA message in Davos: RP ripe for more trade

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

DAVOS, SWITZERLAND (VIA PLDT)—The Philippines is ripe for more trade and investment.

This is the message that President Macapagal-Arroyo will share with her fellow heads of state and with political, economic and civil society leaders who have come to this resort town, the highest in Europe, to attend the meeting of the World Economic Forum.

The WEF is an independent international organization founded in 1971, which is committed to improving the state of the world by engaging leaders to discuss and find solutions to global problems.

As the Philippines is the chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), Ms Arroyo is scheduled to give her opening remarks today, the third of the five-day WEF annual meeting, at Hotel Meierhof on the topic "Asean's Economic Roadmap."

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said in a statement here that the President's participation

GMA/ A8

IN THE KNOW

Swiss professor started forum in '71

THE WORLD ECONOMIC FOrum is an independent organization that hosts an annual meeting of leaders to address global issues.

The organization's prototype was initiated in 1971 by Swiss academician Klaus Schwab. He gathered European business leaders in Davos, Switzerland, to discuss global management practices.

The successful conference

SWISS/ A8

US official mobbed by Muslim kids

By Christine O. Avendaño and Volt Contreras

THE HIGHEST UNITED STATES OFFICIAL TO visit Mindanao in recent memory, Karen Hughes, undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, flew to Jolo yesterday "to see first-hand" what the Philippine and US governments were doing to win the fight against terrorism, according to an official privy to Hughes' itinerary.

"Maybe because [Washington] would like to find out what works in Mindanao and why the US presence is welcomed there and not necessarily in other places," said the official of Hughes' visit but requesting anonymity for lack of clearance to speak on the matter.

Hughes was mobbed by hundreds of Muslim schoolchildren waving paper Philippine and US flags after she stepped out of a military helicopter in Maimbung, Sulu. Security remained tight for her though.

"Well, it's very heartwarming to see the warm smiles," she said, when asked how her reception differed from that in other Muslim societies.

Reuters quoted Hughes as saying that US operations in Mindanao should be a model for other parts of the world.

US President George W. Bush had conveyed his gratitude to the Arroyo administration for its fight against terrorism through Hughes, according to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Hughes is a longtime adviser of Bush and one of his closest confidantes.

US OFFICIAL/ A14

HEROES IN HEROES HALL: President Arroyo hosts a thanksgiving dinner and awarding rites at the Palace's Heroes Hall for the 78 military officers and men who had been winning the antiterrorist campaign, particularly against the Abu Sayyaf group. They were all promoted on the spot. Flanking Ms Arroyo are AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita. Also present is Army Chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino Jr. (back row, 3rd from left). LYN RILLON

Slain Abu Sayyaf leader lived in floral 'paradise'

By Dona Pazzibugan

ABU SULAIMAN, THE NOTORIOUS deputy of Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khadaffy Janjalani, had been living in "paradise" in the jungles of Sulu before troops finally caught up with him on Jan. 16.

Sulaiman (real name Jainal Antel Sali) was described by the military as the chief planner of the Dos Palmas kidnapping in 2001, the blasting of SuperFerry 14 in 2004 and the Valentine's Day bombings in Makati, Davao and General Santos cities in 2005.

The last moments of Sulaiman were recounted in a news conference yesterday by soldiers who on Wednesday night received medals and promotions from President Macapagal-Arroyo in ceremonies at Malacañang.

"You are the soldiers of the people in the finest tradition of the uniform," Ms Arroyo said.

"You have repulsed the armed tormentors of the people by the gallant shield of the Filipino soldier." She said the remaining Abu Sayyaf guerrillas were just remnants. *"Retaso na lang sila sa inyo. Nakuha na ninyo yung mga ulo* (They are just rags. You have their heads)," she said.

In all, 78 soldiers and officers received awards during the affair that was also attended by visiting US Undersecretary of State Karen Hughes.

Army 1st Lt. Almirante Mijares, head

SLAIN/ A14

Leviste lawyers decry new probe as an 'injustice'

THE LAWYERS OF BUSINESSMAN ANTONio "Tony" Leviste are protesting a Makati court's order for a reinvestigation of the fatal shooting of Rafael de las Alas and a review of the decision to indict Leviste for the lesser offense of homicide.

Lawyers Manuel Singson and Allan Gepty said a reinvestigation, which could result in the charges against Leviste being upgraded to murder, would be an injustice to their client.

They said the reinvestigation was "only a farce and tailor-made to persecute, not prosecute, the accused for the crime of murder."

The family of Rafael de las Alas, Leviste's trusted aide who was shot by the former Batangas governor on Jan. 12 after an alleged argument, asked the Department of Justice to order a review of the case as they believed De las Alas had been murdered. Leviste has claimed the shooting was an act of self-defense.

Leviste's lawyers said the complainants were the "improper party" to seek a reinvestigation.

"The right to a reinvestigation belongs to the accused because he was not afforded a preliminary investigation," they said in the appeal they filed with Makati Judge Elmo Alameda, reiterating the oral arguments they made in open court last Thursday.

Leviste, who underwent inquest proceedings when he surrendered after the shooting, was the one who should ask for

LEVISTE/ A15

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: N. and E. Luzon will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers. Visayas and Mindanao will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: CYRILL BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/01/26/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Sotto, Oreta may join admin

By Christine O. Avendaño and TJ Burgonio

OPPOSITIONISTS VICENTE SOTTO III AND Tessie Aquino-Oreta, who have joined the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) political party, might just end up being part of the administration ticket in the senatorial race.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said this was "highly probable" as the two have aligned themselves with a party that has been a coalition partner of the administration in several elections.

"The NPC is chaired by [Eduardo] Danding Cojuangco and is very supportive of the President," he told reporters.

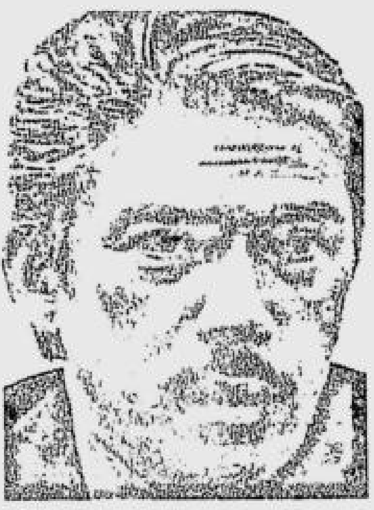
He said Sotto and Oreta would pass the important and number one criterion set by the administration in choosing its senatorial candidates, and that is their "winnability."

"We can say that probably they have the advantage, they are well-known," Ermita said.

"The fact alone that they have been senators for some time means that they have made a mark in politics," he added.

But Ermita made clear that he was not privy to the discussions on the administration's senatorial line-up, and "could not say with finality" that the duo were already in the administration's senatorial slate.

Malacañang officials said they would make an announcement before Feb. 12, the deadline for candidates in the May polls to file their certificates of candidacy.


SOTTO

Sotto said that he intended to run under the NPC even if this would mean being fielded as an administration candidate.

"I will have no problem with it if I am allowed to maintain my oppositionist stance on certain issues," he said.

He said he was not aware of any alliances that the NPC has made for the elections as the party would be meeting next week to finalize its stance. He said Ermita was probably speculating.

"We simply joined a party that we know can help and support us," Sotto said.

Opposition Sen. Luisa Ejercito said Sotto and Oreta were officially out of the United Opposition and its senatorial slate now that they have joined the NPC.

"They're out of UNO. They have joined the NPC and their new boss is Danding Cojuangco," said Ejercito, the wife of ousted President Joseph Estrada who is recognized as the leader of the opposition.

Ejercito said Oreta had confided to her last Wednesday that they felt "marginalized" in the UNO, and that she wasn't running under the UNO-led senatorial slate in May.

After months of being reported as shoo-ins for the UNO ticket, Sotto and Oreta surprised their opposition colleagues last Wednesday when they took their oath before Rizal Rep. Jack Duavit, the NPC secretary-general.

Their move has triggered speculations that they could end up running in the administration ticket like Cojuangco's nephew and party-mate, Tarlac Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, who is reportedly running for senator.

"I hope I'm wrong. But reading between the lines of their statements after joining NPC, with Malacañang gloating over that development, they could have taken one big step toward forming a unity ticket with the administration since NPC is allied with Lakas," Sen. Panfilo Lacson said.

"Admittedly, they can provide credibility to an otherwise dry, if not dead, senatorial slate that the administration cannot even put up for the May elections," Lacson said in a text message.

A source close to Estrada said that Sotto and Oreta running with Teodoro in the administration slate was "near certain."

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said he doubted the pair would run in the administration ticket and expected them to run with the opposition in the end.

"I know Tito and Tessie are oppositionist at heart. I do not rule out the possibility that they will become part and parcel of the UNO for the simple reason that the NPC is both allied with the opposition and administration," he said in an interview.

Court allows Gringo to file bid

By Tarra Quismundo

SETTING RESTRICTIONS, A MAKATI City court yesterday allowed two aspirants for the Senate who are in detention to leave their cells so they could personally file their certificates of candidacy with the Commission on Elections in Intramuros, Manila.

In separate orders, Judge Oscar Pimentel of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148 granted the requests of former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan and Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV to allow them to personally file their certificates next month.

Pimentel gave Trillanes between 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. on Feb. 6 to file his candidacy papers and Honasan between 8:30 a.m. and noon of Feb. 7 to file his COC. Trillanes had specified the date in his request to the court.

HONASAN INQUIRER PHOTO

The judge though set guidelines for the filing furlough, directing both "to refrain from discussing the merits of this case with the media, avoid any form of premature campaigning, and from issuing inflammatory and seditious statements against the government."

He also ordered the lawyers of both men to let the court know the certificates had been filed no more than one day after their respective visits to the Comelec.

Honasan, held at the Philippine National Police's Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, since his arrest in November, and Trillanes, detained at the Marine brig in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, both declared their intention to run for senator in the May elections. Both face trial on coup d'etat charges for their alleged roles in the Oakwood mutiny of 2003.

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4 killed as gov't forces, studes clash in Lebanon

BEIRUT—GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION supporters clashed on a Beirut university campus Thursday, battling each other with sticks, stones and even pieces of furniture in new violence spilling over from Lebanon's political crisis. One person was reported dead.

But the death toll rose to four, an opposition-run television station reported.

NBN said two of the dead were students loyal to the opposition, which includes the Shiite Muslim Hezbollah and Amal groups.

Black smoke poured into the sky from cars engulfed in flames as armored vehicles full of troops moved in to try to keep the two sides apart. But the riot spread to the streets around Beirut Arab University as students smashed parked cars and battled for hours.

The battle grew out of an argument between progovernment Sunni Muslims and supporters of the Shiite Hezbollah opposition movement in the university cafeteria, students said.

As the melee grew, Hezbollah supporters called in help, and residents from the surrounding Sunni neighborhood joined in. Dozens of vigilantes wearing blue and red construction hats and carrying makeshift weapons—chair legs, pipes, garden tools, sticks and chains—converged on the university and started clashing with the police.

The army was called in with armored vehicles and fired tear gas and live fire in the air to disperse the crowd.

Hezbollah's al-Manar TV reported one of the Shiite group's supporters was killed. Security officials could not confirm the death but reported 17 people were injured. Other TV stations reported that about 25 people were hurt.

The growing street battle illustrated Lebanon's struggle to contain violence sparked by the power struggle between the United States-backed government of Prime Minister Fuad Saniora and the Hezbollah-led opposition. Many fear the violence could spiral out of control and plunge the country into a new civil war.

The university melee came two days after a general strike called by the opposition turned into the worst day of violence since the political crisis began. The strike sparked opposition-government clashes around the country that killed three people and took on a dangerous sectarian tone, with fights between Sunni Muslims and Shiites.

Saniora on Thursday was in Paris at a conference of donor nations that promised more than $7 billion in aid to rebuild after this summer's devastating Israel-Hezbollah war. The money aims to boost Saniora's government, but the chaos at home has raised doubts about whether his government could properly use the money.

The trouble at the university—located in the mainly Sunni Muslim neighborhood of Tarik el-Jadideh—began when an argument broke out in the university cafeteria between pro-government Sunni students and Hezbollah and other antigovernment supporters. They said university security broke up the fight, but the Sunni supporters encircled the campus.

Amid the brawl, some students claimed they came under fire from snipers nearby. Mohammed Abdul-Sater, a 21-year-old Shiite student, said he saw at least three people wounded by the gunfire.

"We are afraid about the future of the country," he said. "We are afraid about civil war," said Abdul-Sater. *AP; Reuters*

12 governors, other local execs lead exodus to Lakas

THE DEFECTION OF 12 PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS and several other local executives to Lakas on Wednesday has reaffirmed the ruling party's "formidable and proven political machinery" and its position as the dominant party in the country, according to its leader, Speaker Jose de Venecia.

In a press statement yesterday, De Venecia said more local officials have sent word of their intention to take their oath as Lakas members. He called the latest exodus of governors and local executives to Lakas as the clearest indication yet that the ruling party has the largest political network nationwide to dominate the May 14 national and local elections.

"The latest defections have strengthened the party; they have made it strong at the top, strong at the middle, and even stronger at the grassroots," said De Venecia after he swore in 12 governors representing a prize haul for the party some two weeks before the start of the senatorial campaign.

De Venecia said he had been assured by top Lakas executives that more local officials would join the exodus to the ruling party before the start of the local campaign.

Politics of performance

"The disunity in the political opposition is driving more and more local officials to join the party in power," the top Lakas official said. De Venecia said the ruling party and the ruling coalition will elevate the campaign to one that will make the politics of performance and the politics of achievement the standard more than the prevailing politics of hate.

"We should depart from negative campaigning. We must inform our people about our program of government on the basis of which we want to be elected to office," he said.

De Venecia referred to the 12 governors and hundreds of local officials as "prize catches" who will add to the already formidable political network of the Lakas-led ruling coalition.

He said Lakas campaign strategists are confident the Lakas platform moored on the solid economic performance of the Arroyo administration will spell victory of its senatorial ticket on May 14.

Leading the new batch of Lakas-CMD recruits who took their oaths before De Venecia in his office at the Batasan Complex in Quezon City were Governors Luis Raymond Villafuerte of Camarines Sur, Ben Evardone of Eastern Samar, Miguel Rene Dominguez of Sarangani and Benjamin Loong of Sulu.

New members

Others who joined the impressive line-up of new Lakas members were Arnan Panaligan of Oriental Mindoro, Borromeo Melchor of Benguet, Glen Prudenciano of Ifugao, Dominador Belac of Kalinga, Maximo Dalog of Mt. Province, Rogelio Espina of Biliran, Jericho Petilla of Leyte and Bimbo Sinsuat of the newly-created province of Shariff Kabunsuan.

Vice Gov. Jesus Sacdalan of North Cotabato was also sworn in as a new Lakas member in simple ceremonies at the Batasan.

ANOTHER ABOUT-FACE

Slain solon's driver recants

By Frank Cimatu
Inquirer Northern Luzon;

BAGUIO CITY—THE DRIVER OF murdered Abra Rep. Luis Bersamin Jr. has changed his story and is now saying the three suspects tagged in the killing had nothing to do with it.

Alan Sawadan, Bersamin's driver, has filed an affidavit saying that Dominador Barbosa, Sonny Taculao and Freddie Dupo were not at the scene of the crime when Bersamin and his bodyguard, Adelfo Ortega, were shot dead outside Mt. Carmel Church in Quezon City on Dec. 16.

Barbosa was reportedly the triggerman and Taculao the driver of the getaway vehicle.

Dupo, a former soldier, is the vice mayor of La Paz, Abra, and a supporter of Abra Gov. Vicente Valera, the alleged mastermind of the killing, according to another suspect, Rufino Panday.

Panday himself has recanted his story, saying he had been coerced into naming Valera by police investigators.

But Charrie Bersamin, the slain lawmaker's daughter, said it was Sawadan who had described the suspects to the police, which led to the sketches that resembled the suspects.

"Alan gave the cartographic sketches in his first testimony so I don't know what he is talking about," Charrie said.

"We have a witness who saw Panday inside the church," she added. "We are now gathering our evidence against them."

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) yesterday denied it had coerced Sawadan into linking Dupo and Panday to the killing of Bersamin.

Director Edgardo Doromal, chief of the CIDG which is investigating the killing of Bersamin, said he heard that Sawadan had told Abra media that men under Supt. Eugene Martin, chief of Task Force Abra, had tried to make him sign a complaint against Dupo and Panday.

"I don't know about that. My guidance to my investigators is that I will not allow any coercion when getting statements from witnesses," Doromal told reporters.

Yesterday, Sawadan's lawyer Ferdinand Ignacio wrote PNP Director General Oscar Calderon to say that PO3 Errol Bigornia, a member of TF Abra under Martin, tried to convince his client to sign documents implicating Dupo and Panday in the assassination.

In his affidavit, Sawadan said he refused to sign the complaint because he did not see Dupo and Panday around when Bersamin was killed.

Ignacio also said his client "experienced unusual happenings that made him believe that he is being harassed or threatened by some people..."

When Bersamin was shot, Sawadan said he tried to draw his own gun but was fired at and wounded by the gunmen.

Sawadan used to be the driver of the slain congressman's younger brother, Court of Appeals Associate Justice Lucas Bersamin. He drove for the congressman for the last six years.

Justice Bersamin said Sawadan, who began working for the family in the early '90s, had made himself scarce since the funeral of the congressman. *With Alcuin Papa*

Release of 24 Pinoy seamen 'very likely'

By Volt Contreras

THE "EARLY RELEASE" OF 24 Filipino seafarers held hostage in Nigeria has become very likely, now that their abductors have succeeded in drawing international attention to the plight of their people, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs' latest assessment of the week-old crisis.

"There is now a strong possibility of an early release," a DFA official, who requested not to be named, said. "It has been mentioned that the abductors' only intention is to highlight the economic plight and problems of the peoples of the Niger Delta."

"Having achieved that in the international stage, they may make the release with no further harm to the hostages."

In a briefing yesterday, DFA spokesperson Ed Malaya said Philippine Ambassador to Nigeria Masaranga Umpa arrived in Warri on Wednesday to get first-hand knowledge on ongoing negotiations with the abductors, identified as militants belonging to the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta.

Umpa met with Delta State Gov. James Ibori and the chief government negotiator, Barrister Ori Omo-Agege, Malaya reported.

The 24 Filipinos were seized by the militants on Jan. 20 as their German-owned cargo vessel Baco Liner II entered Nigerian waters near Warri. Seventeen of them were reportedly dragged to a nearby village while seven were kept as hostages aboard the anchored ship.

NATIONAL FEEDING PROGRAM: Sen. Edgardo Angara and Don Don Bagatsing give food packs to students of the Moises Salvador Elementary School in Sampaloc as part of the National Feeding Program of the DSWD. REM ZAMORA

P100M sought for nutrition drive

THIRTY PERCENT OF FILIPINO CHILDREN below five years old are stunted or too short for their age while another six percent are wasted, that is, dangerously thin, as a result of poor nutrition, Sen. Edgardo Angara said yesterday.

Citing studies on malnourished children, Angara said the malnutrition problem has "brutal and irreparable effects on children and is one of the country's biggest tragedies."

Angara, a former president of the University of the Philippines, said that malnutrition cut across all regions, particularly Western and Eastern Visayas, Southern and Central Mindanao, Bicol and even parts of the national capital region.

He called on the government to allocate P100 million a year to institutionalize a school feeding program that would provide students in public elementary schools with fresh milk, vitamin supplements, fortified snacks and high-carbohydrate foods.

"Malnutrition in our country dramatizes the miserable state investments on human capital," Angara said during a medical mission he led at the Moises Salvador Elementary School in Manila yesterday.

Angara has been batting for a genuine school feeding program where schoolchildren are given foods rich in carbohydrates, protein and calcium for a recommended period of time.

He has undertaken just such a school feeding program for students from Grades 1 to 3 who are given milk, noodles and eggs on a 120-day feeding cycle. *Cynthia D. Balana*

Judge gets 25 years for extortion

By Norman Bordadora

A MUNICIPAL TRIAL court judge was sentenced to 25 years in prison after the Sandiganbayan found him guilty of extortion and estafa (fraud).

The Sandiganbayan Third Division threw out Judge Wilfredo Suriaga's claim that he was framed when he was caught by the National Bureau of Investigation accepting marked money from a couple in 1999.

Suriaga had asked spouses Federico and Joselin Calilung for P250,000 in exchange for the judge brokering a favorable decision by another judge in a case involving the couple, court records disclosed.

The Calilungs alerted the NBI about the judge's proposition. NBI agents immediately prepared marked money and launched an entrapment operation.

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NPA bomb depot falls

TROOPS HAVE OVERrun a communist rebel camp in Surigao del Sur that is believed to be the guerrillas' biggest explosives depot in the region, an army spokesperson said yesterday.

Major Ernesto Torres said the cave on the outskirts of Tagbina town was believed to be the base of communist leader Jorge Madlos alias Oris.

"The discovery of the huge explosives depot/factory has also proved that the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army should remain tagged as an international terrorist group," Torres said in a statement.

Peace talks with the communists, brokered by Norway, stalled in 2004 when Manila refused to persuade the United States and some European states to remove the NPA from their terrorism blacklists.

Torres said the camp, which also served as a training facility, was captured after a brief firefight on Wednesday.

There were no reported casualties on either side. *Reuters*

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Corrections

IN THE JAN. 25 issue, a front-page—"5 activists killed in Bicol"—carried an erroneous headline. In the article, only four slain activists were named.

* * *

In the same issue, the main Business story on Page B1—"Neda says economy grew 5.3-5.6 % in '07"—carried an erroneous headline. The story was about the economic growth story in 2006—not 2007.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Please be informed that the Royal Netherlands Embassy will relocate its office as of 29 January 2007 the address will be:

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Where will P1.9-B coco levy fund dividend in SMC go, 2 solons ask

By Michael Lim Ubac

MILITANT LAWMAKERS YESTERDAY ASKED the House of Representatives to conduct an inquiry into the estimated P1.9-billion in accumulated coconut levy dividends in San Miguel Corp. (SMC), warning the money might be used to boost the campaign kitty of the administration coalition in the 2007 elections.

Acting on a Jan. 20 report published in the INQUIRER, Representatives Rafael Mariano and Crispin Beltran filed House Resolution No. 1491 directing the committee on agriculture and food to conduct an inquiry into the Coconut Industry Investment Fund's (CIIF) plan to use the SMC dividends.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) approved a resolution a week ago allowing the CIIF to use the dividends accumulated from its 27-percent stake in SMC "without stating specifically where the funds are to be used," Mariano said.

In a joint resolution, the lawmakers said it was illegal for the government to use the coco levy fund, or any of its increments, without the approval of the small coconut farmers "and for purposes contrary to the best interest of the small coconut farmers."

"The PCGG and the CIIF are merely holders in trust of the coconut levy funds owned by the small coconut farmers," the two party-list lawmakers said.

Mariano said in an interview the PCGG move would "lay the groundwork for the Arroyo administration to steal the [entire] coco levy fund."

"I hope the House will act swiftly to investigate and stop Ms Arroyo's plan to use the coco levy funds to bankroll the administration's electoral campaign," said Mariano, national chair of the militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

Mariano lauded the Supreme Court's junking on Monday of the PCGG petition seeking government approval of the agreement it had entered into with the Government Service Insurance System to sell P1.45-billion worth of SMC shares.

"The Supreme Court ruling only shows that the PCGG has no right to use the coco levy funds," he said.

The P1.9 billion in SMC shares is part of the various assets that were acquired with the forced tax the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos imposed on coconut farmers between 1973 and 1982 ostensibly to develop the industry.

The resolution noted that PCGG Commissioner Narciso Nario had confirmed in an interview the PCGG had already approved the use of the dividends.

It quoted Nario as saying the funds would be used in accordance with the various presidential decrees that created the CIIF, although he refused to say specifically how and where the funds would be spent.

In support of its decision, the PCGG had asked the Solicitor General for his opinion on the commission's resolution.

Mariano recalled that two years ago, there was an attempt to use the coco levy funds to put up an P8.4-billion hybrid coconut nursery project on 110,000 hectares of land in Agusan del Sur.

The project did not materialize, however, after farmers and militant organizations opposed it.

KMP deputy secretary general for internal affairs Willy Marbella expressed apprehension the CIIF use of the P1.9-billion SMC dividends would be "worse than the fertilizer scam in which the Arroyo administration diverted through the Department of Agriculture some P728 million in government funds to her campaign kitty without anybody being punished."

Lay forum kicks off heart confab

A LAY FORUM ON life-threatening conditions that complicate hypertension and cholesterol problems or dyslipidemia, will be the kick-off activity for the 12th Joint Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH) and the Philippine Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society (PLAS).

Renowned local experts will serve as resource persons for the lay forum which is scheduled on Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. at Function Room Sapphire A and B, Crowne Plaza Galleria (Manila) Hotel in Ortigas, Pasig City.

It is a pre-convention activity and part of a series of public education campaigns conducted by PSH and PLAS as both organizations pursue programs to assist in controlling the upsurge of cardiovascular diseases.

All the major risk factors including high blood pressure, cholesterol problems, obesity, smoking and stress will be tackled by a panel of selected medical experts who will give short lectures followed by an interactive question-and-answer session with all lay participants. Practical tips will be given on how to control these risk factors and prevent heart attacks and strokes.

The expert panel includes Dr. Nelson Abelardo, PSH president; Dr. Ruby Go, PLAS president; Dr. Jesse Baylon, Ms Fely Velandria, a nutritionist and Mr. Napoleon Caballero, a physical therapist. The overall coordinator of the forum is Dr. Rosa Allyn Sy.

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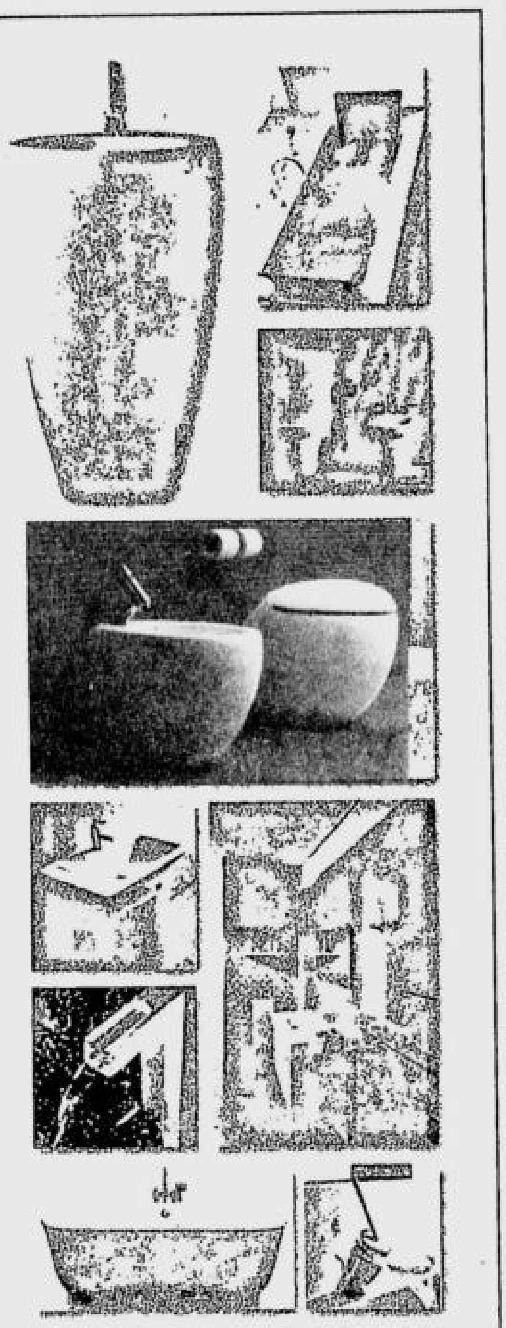
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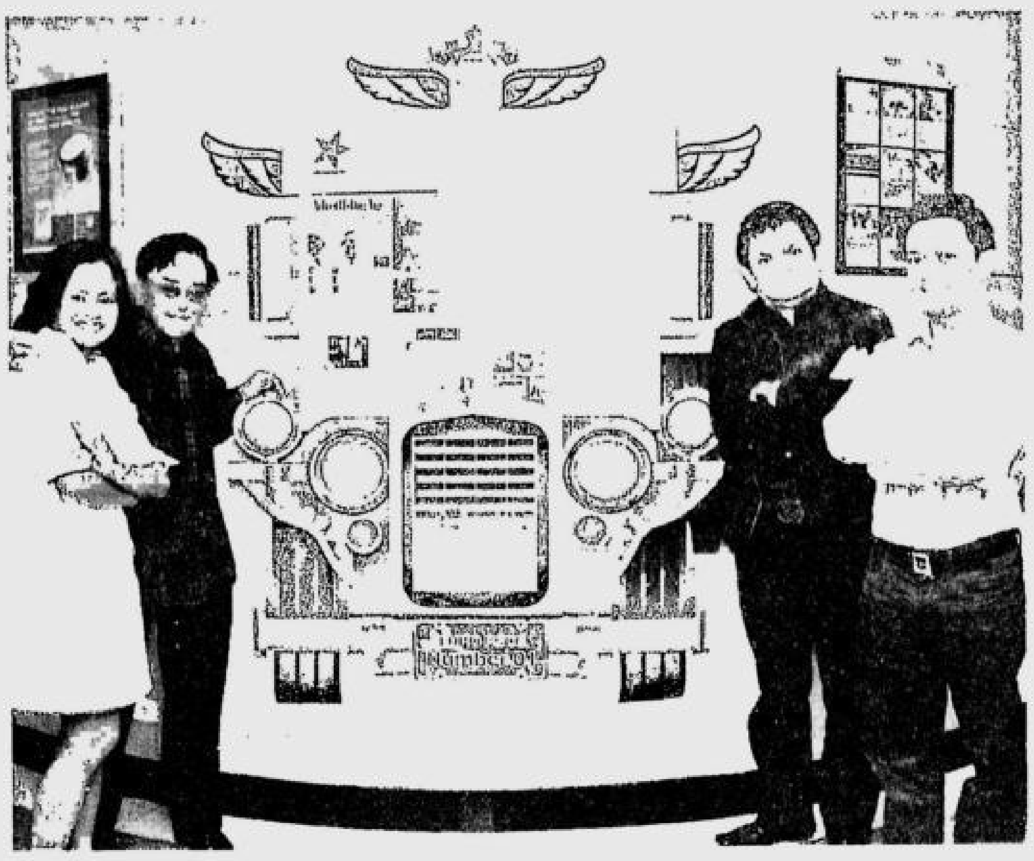

GLOBAL AGENCY OF THE YEAR

Local officials of the Euro RSCG Worldwide rejoice after being named Global Agency of the Year by prestigious advertising trade publications Advertising Age of the USA and Campaign of the United Kingdom. From left are Monique Ignacio, president; Charlie Agatep, chairman; Ed Mapa Jr., managing partner and chief operating officer, and Norman Agatep, managing director and chief creative officer.

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Cayetano bid for Arroyo bank waiver a joke, says Palace

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG HAS JUMPED INTO THE messy verbal tussle between First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano which has rocked the House ethics committee for two days.

In an interview with reporters, Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol said Cayetano's demand for President Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband to sign a waiver on his global bank accounts was a "joke."

"What he is demanding from the First Gentleman to sign a waiver to scrutinize the bank accounts of the First Family is not allowed. What Peter is doing is a joke. Can the accuser ask evidence from the one he is accusing? Why can't he find the evidence on his own?" said Apostol.

Apostol said that Cayetano was probably acting in desperation because he got "burned" the first time he accused the First Gentleman on the German bank accounts and now he wanted to put the squeeze on the First Gentleman.

"I think what he is doing is foolish. What is happening now is confrontational, there was no formality during the hearing. The chair should have not allowed tempers to rise and (participants) snap at each other," Apostol said.

But he said he could not blame if the First Gentleman had to raise his voice "because Peter is really annoying."

Apostol is confident that plans to impeach the President for a third time using Cayetano's evidence would not prosper.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, January 26, 2007
Sts. Timothy and Titus, Bishops
1st Reading: 2 Tim 1:1-8 (or Tit 1:1-5)
Gospel: Luke 10:1-9

The Lord appointed 72 other disciples and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place, where he himself was to go. And he said to them, "The harvest is rich, but the workers are few. So you must ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers to his harvest. Courage! I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Set off without purse or bag or sandals; and do not stop at the homes of those you know.

Whatever house you enter, first bless them saying: 'Peace to this house.' If a friend of peace lives there, the peace shall rest upon that person. But if not, the blessing will return to you. Stay in that house eating and drinking at their table, for the worker deserves to be paid. Do not move from house to house.

When they welcome you in any town, eat what they offer you. Heal the sick who are there and say to them: 'The kingdom of God has drawn near to you."

Commentary

2 Tim—Timothy is addressed with prayers and salutations in the Body of Christ and the Trinity, and as a member of his family of believers: His grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. They seed him with the fire of the spirit and his faith was brought to flame in the laying on of hands by Paul in the presence of the community—and that spirit is ours too.

Tit: Titus is addressed as a son in the faith, in the Lord Jesus, by Paul, prayed for and with, and encouraged to share the faith and knowledge that he has been given by growing in it and passing it onto others. Always the grace and peace of Christ is with him/all of them.

Lk: The harvest is waiting in every generation for those with strength, generosity and gratitude to bring it in. Jesus sends 72 out, two by two—the usual way to do any form of ministry, evangelization, preaching, teaching outside of the community and to go before the Word and the community—as Timothy and Titus did (as Lois and Eunice did) as all of us are called to do. We are to bring the Peace of Christ, healing and hope, and the words of the Gospel. That is essential. That is our calling, our sending and our hope.

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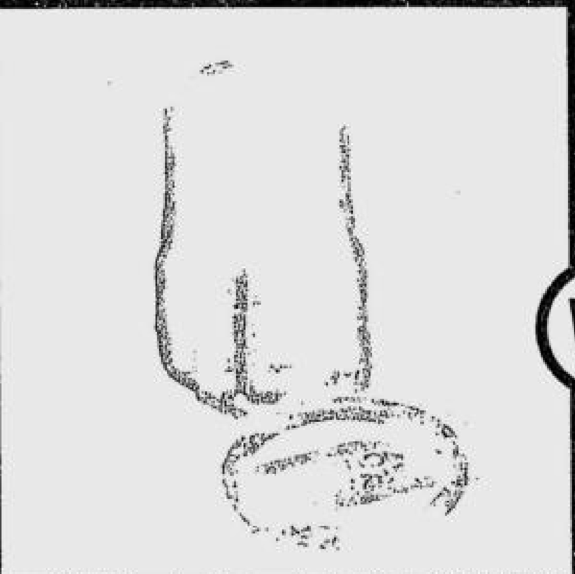

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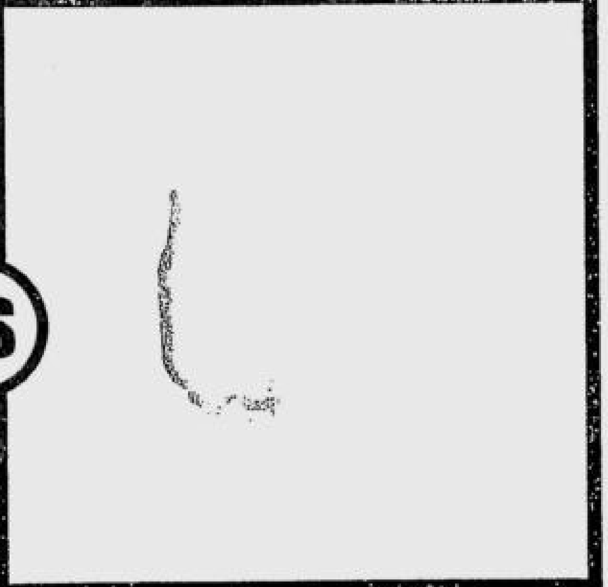

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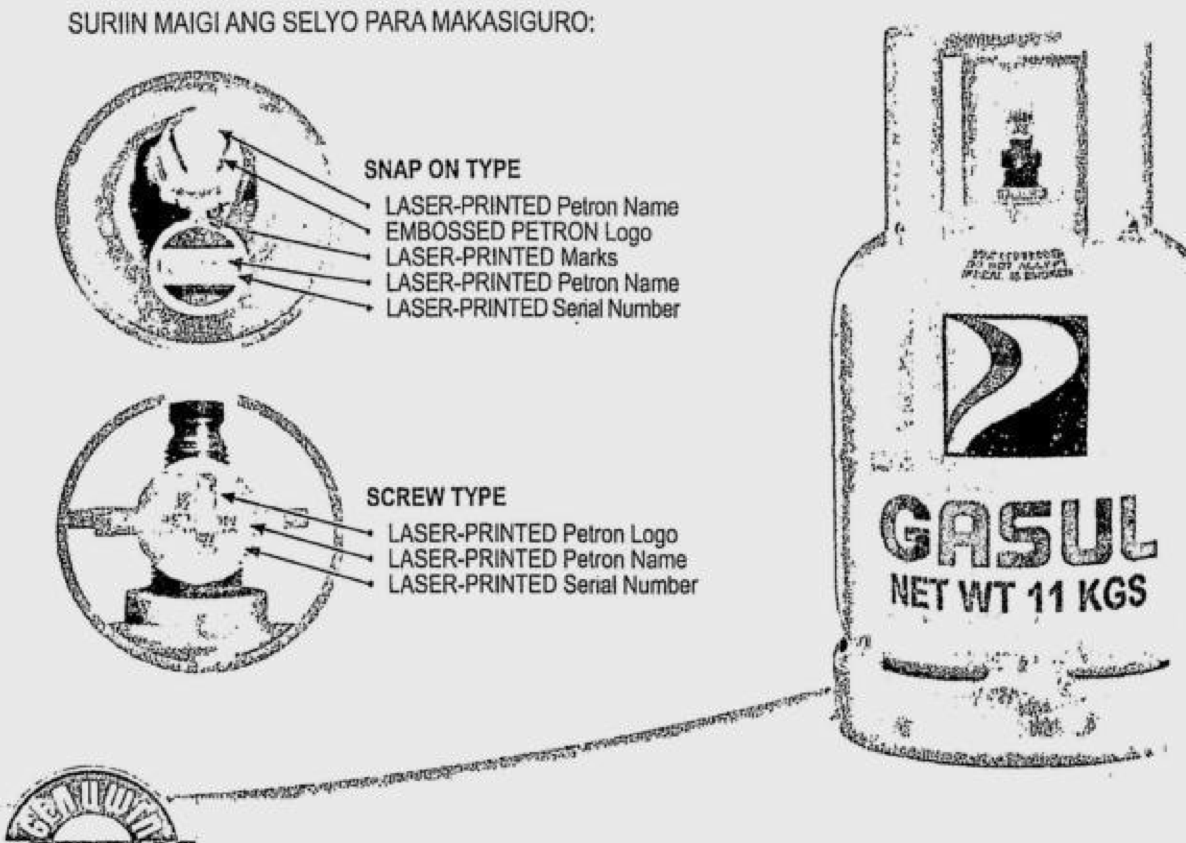
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Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

GUIDELINES FOR ACCREDITATION OF FOREIGN OBSERVERS IN CONNECTION WITH THE MAY 14, 2007 SYNCHRONIZED NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS.

PRESENT:

ABALOS, Benjamin S.	Chairman
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Jr., Florentino A.	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.	Commissioner

x---x

Promulgated: 11 January 2007

RESOLUTION NO. 7802

WHEREAS, foreigners or groups of foreigners may be coming to observe the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections;

WHEREAS, there is a necessity to regulate the activities of foreign observes in the elections;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 7166 and other election laws, the Commission on Elections has RESOLVED to promulgate as it hereby RESOLVES to promulgate, as follows:

SECTION 1. *Accreditation* - Any foreigner or foreign group, organization, committee or association, representing government or private interests, who may want to observe the May 14, 2007 elections, shall file an application for accreditation with the Commission through the Director IV, Education and Information Department. The deadline for filing application for accreditation for foreign observers shall be on April 30, 2007.

SECTION 2. *Online Filing of Applications for Accreditation* - Applications for accreditation may be filed online using the online application form on the COMELEC website (http://www.comelec.gov.ph), and the website of the COMELEC-EID (http://www.bagongbotante.com).

SECTION 3. *Documentary requirements* - The application shall be supported by the following documents:

a. Duly accomplished information sheet;
b. Two (2) recently taken 2"x2" colored photographs of the applicant; and
c. Endorsement by the ambassador or Consul of the home country of the applicants.

SECTION 4. *Identification Cards* - Upon approval of the application, the Commission shall issue individual identification cards to the accredited foreign observers.

SECTION 5. *Privileges* - Duly accredited observers shall have the following privileges:

A BEFORE ELECTION DAY:

1. Request any official of the government, representatives of registered political parties, organization or coalitions, candidates or their representatives, representatives of media, private firms or organizations, any political party or candidate for interview or briefing on the coming electoral exercise;
2. Observe the continuing registration and validation of voters and other election preparation activities at the officers of the election officers.

B. ON ELECTION DAY:

Observe the conduct of elections in any locality, interview voters, political leaders and other individuals outside the polling place, and document these by means of audio, visual or audio-visual recordings, subject to the prohibition under section 5 hereof.

C. AFTER THE ELECTION:

1. Observe the counting of votes by the Boards of Election Inspectors and canvassing of results of votes conducted by the municipality, city, provincial, district and regional Boards of Canvassers; and
2. Observe the canvassing proceedings of the Commission acting as the National Board of Canvassers for Senators.

SECTION 6. *Prohibited Acts* - It shall be unlawful for any foreigner, whether juridical or natural person to:

1. Aid any candidate or political party directly or indirectly;
2. Take part or influence in any manner the election;
3. Contribute or make any expenditure in connection with any election campaign or partisan political activity;
4. Enter any polling place during voting hours; and
5. Enter places reserved for voters or for the Board of Election Inspectors or to mingle and talk with the voters inside the polling place.

SECTION 7. *Penalty of violation* - Any violation of the above provisions shall be punishable with one to six years of imprisonment and deportation which shall be enforced after the service of the prison term has been served.

SECTION 8. *Effectivity* - This Resolution shall take effect on the seventh day after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

SECTION 9. *Dissemination* - The Education and Information Department shall implement this Resolution, cause its publication and furnish copies to all Regional Election Directors, Provincial Election Supervisors, Election Officers, all political parties, all candidates, Philippine Information Agency, and the Department of Foreign Affairs, which shall cause dissemination thereof to its foreign service establishments and to representatives of foreign countries in the Philippines, for their information and guidance.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

NICODEMO T. FERRER
Commissioner

(PDI - Jan. 26, 2007)

DPWH exec's dismissal affirmed

By Armand N. Nocum

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS AFFIRMED the dismissal of a Department of Public Works and Highways official—who was once linked to ousted President Joseph Estrada—for failing the government's lifestyle check.

In a 16-page decision, the appellate court upheld the decision of the Ombudsman dismissing Region IV Public Works Director Romeo G. Panganiban for allegedly amassing some P50-million worth of properties illegally.

Court of Appeals Associate Justice Aurora Santiago-Lagman, who penned the decision, found Panganiban guilty of grave misconduct and dishonesty and affirmed the Ombudsman's right to dismiss him.

"It is manifest that the Ombudsman has the authority to dismiss petitioner (Panganiban) from government service, as it has legally done in this case. In an administrative case, a finding of guilt would have to be sustained for as long as it is supported by substantial evidence ...," the court's 14th Division decision read.

The decision was concurred in by Associate Justices Bienvenido L. Reyes and Apolinario D. Bruselas.

Panganiban thus forfeited his retirement benefits and is perpetually disqualified from the government service.

The court noted that substantial evidence was defined as relevant proof that a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion.

Separate case

"The gauge of substantial evidence is satisfied where there is reasonable ground to believe the petitioner is guilty of misconduct, even if the evidence might not be overwhelming. In the absence of a clear showing of grave abuse of discretion, such finding need not be disturbed," the appellate court said.

A separate case against Panganiban involving the forfeiture of unlawfully acquired properties is pending before the Sandiganbayan. Panganiban was charged with allegedly acquiring property whose worth was manifestly out of proportion to his salary and other lawful income.

In his statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) for the year 2001, Panganiban had declared a net worth of P13,208,590.

But he was found to have undeclared real property with a total worth of at least P40,766,300 between the years 1994 and 2001.

Between 1986 and 2001, his total income was reportedly only P2,516,818.90.

In sum, the properties, together with their fruits and/or proceeds in the total amount of P51,003,071.60, constitute unexplained wealth forfeitable in favor of the government under Republic Act No. 1379, said the Court of Appeals.

Panganiban reportedly failed to include in his SALN properties such as a house in Los Baños, Laguna; a four-story building in Sta. Cruz Manila; a house in Ayala Alabang; a residential lot in Laguna, and a 3-bedroom house in Pasadena, California.

Panganiban was once reported to have financed the renovation of then President Estrada's vacation home in Pagsanjan, Laguna. But both Estrada and Panganiban denied this.

Foreign-funded PW projects post record disbursement

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND Highways (DPWH) said yesterday it posted a 118-percent disbursement rate in foreign-funded projects in 2006, its best infrastructure performance in 10 years.

According to the DPWH 2006 yearend report, the "significant achievements," especially in the implementation of foreign-assisted projects, were the result of reforms implemented by the agency.

The project implementation office (PIO) of the DPWH said in a press statement that its projects reached a disbursement level of $464 million, surpassing its 2006 target of $393 million by $71 million or 18 percent. The previous three-year average was $275 million based on portfolio reviews of the National Economic Development Authority (Neda).

Neda defines disbursement rate as the percentage of a target disbursement for a given year agreed upon by the DPWH and an international funding agency.

The PIO noted that improved internal management procedures, streamlined fund disbursements, and accelerated construction and maintenance of its projects resulted in a record accomplishment compared with the mediocre performance since the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

Increased revenue

"The feat was achieved as the DPWH rode on the economic crest of the government's increased revenue collections and improved fiscal position," PIO said.

PIO also attributed the department's accomplishments to the leadership of Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane.

Among the major projects completed in 2006 is the World Bank-assisted National Road Improvement Project Phase I which was pilot-implemented on 984 km of national roads and bridges.

The PIO also said the major reforms started in 2005 included an improved procurement system with integrated civil works contractor registry, financial management, internal controls and audit.

It also cited sustained compliance with good governance policies and integrity action programs, as well as the anticorruption executive development program with the 2006 Code of Conduct for officials and employees.

The PIO said this was the reason why DPWH was ranked eighth among 70 agencies by the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) and was awarded with a Certificate of Recognition presented by President Macapagal-Arroyo to Ebdane for implementing PAGC'S anticorruption compliance measures.

It said its anticorruption program resulted in the filing of charges against three officials. It added that 30 cases were investigated.

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First Philippine Housing Finance Forum:
Trends and Outlook

Antonio Herbosa Gonzalo Bongolan Vice Pres. Noli De Castro Florian Steinberg Jose Camacho

February 2, 2007
Grand Ballroom
Manila Peninsula, Makati City
8 am - 5 pm

Program Schedule

8:30 am	Registration	
9:00	Welcome Remarks	
	Overview of the Program	- Ma. Belen S. Fabella Vice President Guaranty Group
	Introduction of the Vice-President	- USec. Lucille Ortile HUDCC
9:15	Government's Vision on Affordable Housing and Sustainable Housing Finance	- Hon. Noli L. De Castro Vice President of the Phils. & HUDCC Chair
9:45	Open Forum with Heads of Key Shelter Agencies	
10:00	Housing Finance for the Poor in the Philippines and Asian Countries: Barriers and Opportunities	- Florian Steinberg Housing & Urban Development Specialists Asian Development Bank
10:30	Open Forum	
10:45	Overview of Philippine Housing and Housing Finance	- Gonzalo B.A. Bongolan HGC President
11:30	Open Forum	
12:00 nn	Lunch Break	
1:00 pm	Timing Asset Dispositions	- Antonio B. Herbosa Principal, Corporate Finance Punong Bayan and Araullo
1:30	Open Forum	
2:00	Coffee Break	
2:30 - 3:15 pm	Innovative Housing Finance Schemes in the Philippines and Asia	- Jose Isidro N. Camacho Vice Chairman for Non-Japan Asia, Credit Suisse First Boston & Former DOF Secretary
3:15 - 4:00 pm	Open Forum	

Emcee : Maribel Fabella
Tito Butardo

Moderators : Melinda M. Adriano
Roger Saliga
Ma. Caridad L. Calingo
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KAMPI MAN IN LEYTE: The hands of Ferdinand Martin Romualdez (center) are raised by Kampi leaders following his oath taking as party member at the Manila Polo Club in Makati. The Kampi officials are (from left) Rep. Felix Alfelor, Kampi national president Rep. Luis Villafuerte, Kampi Secretary General Emigdio Tanjuatco and Rep. Joey Solis. EDWIN BACASMAS

Kampi picks a Romualdez to challenge Petilla in Leyte

By Christine Gaylican

THE ADMINISTRATION PARTY, THE KABAlikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), has dropped the Petilla clan and picked a member of the Romualdez clan to lead the party in the first district of Leyte.

Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, 43, a son of Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, a brother of former First Lady Imelda Marcos, was yesterday sworn in as the Kampi member and candidate in the congressional elections for the first district of Leyte. He will challenge incumbent Rep. Remedios Petilla of the ruling Lakas-CMD.

The election fight will pit two of Leyte's dominant political clans. Petilla is a member of the Veloso family, a much more powerful Leyte political clan which has dominated politics in much of the province for generations. Petilla's son is governor of Leyte. Various members of the clan serve as mayors and congressional representatives in the province's other districts and towns.

Following the downfall of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and the exile and prosecution of the dictator's extended family, the Romualdezes ceased to be a political force in Leyte, with only one member of the clan, Imelda's brother, Alfredo, now holding political office as mayor of Tacloban City.

Kampi national president Rep. Luis Villafuerte, who administered the oath, said Martin would bring a new brand of politics to the province.

"He was one of those young advocates for responsible corporate governance with his stint as director and later chair of the very profitable Equitable-PCI Bank," Villafuerte said.

He said a "mind-set for business" would be the best thing for Leyte which needs to harness its natural resources, including untapped geothermal energy fields and agriculture and marine products.

Martin, a lawyer, said he was following in the footsteps of his father, Kokoy, who was governor of the province for almost 20 years and later served as ambassador to the United States.

"Six out of seven mayors from the district are now with us and this is only the beginning of a series of oath-taking ceremonies that will take place in the first district," said Martin, who has been appointed district chair of Kampi in the province.

Three mayors from Leyte's first district—Teodoro Sevilla of Palo town, Ernesto Fabi of Babatngon and Melchor Quemado of Sta. Fe—were on hand for the swearing-in yesterday which was held at the Manila Polo Club.

Martin said he was now in consultations with various people to find out what the needs of his district are.

Martin was in the spotlight last year during the much-publicized and still continuing boardroom fight at the Equitable PCI Bank, where he is now vice chair. He also chairs the family-controlled Benguet Corp.

According to his brother, Benjamin Philip Romualdez, the Benguet Corp. president, Martin has the calling to serve as he went to work for the family's school in the province upon their return from the United States.

"He served as dean of the law school department of the Divine Word College in Tacloban and later had his private law practice before going into the corporate world and joined the TMEQ Group," he said.

Erap wants to visit ma weekly

OUSTED PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to allow him to visit his ailing 102-year-old mother on a weekly basis.

In a manifestation before the antigraft court, Estrada lawyer Rene Saguisag said his client had learned that his mother Mary Ejercito's condition was fast deteriorating.

The Sandiganbayan Special Division that tried Estrada on plunder and perjury charges had allowed him occasional visits to his mother at her North Greenhills, San Juan home because of her failing health.

It had only required Estrada to give the court due notice whenever he wanted to pay his mother a visit. *Norman Bordadora*

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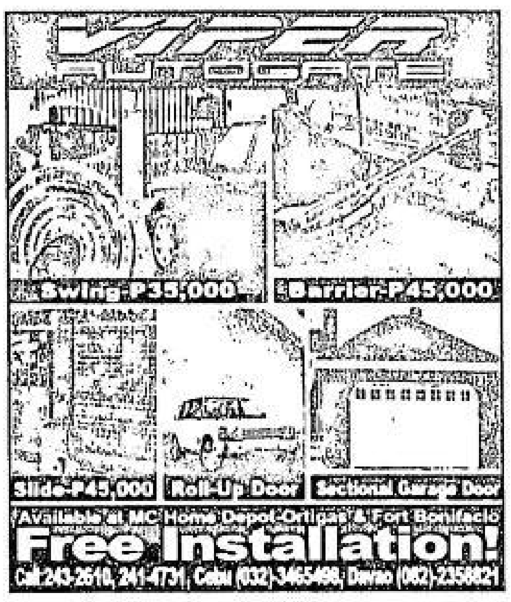

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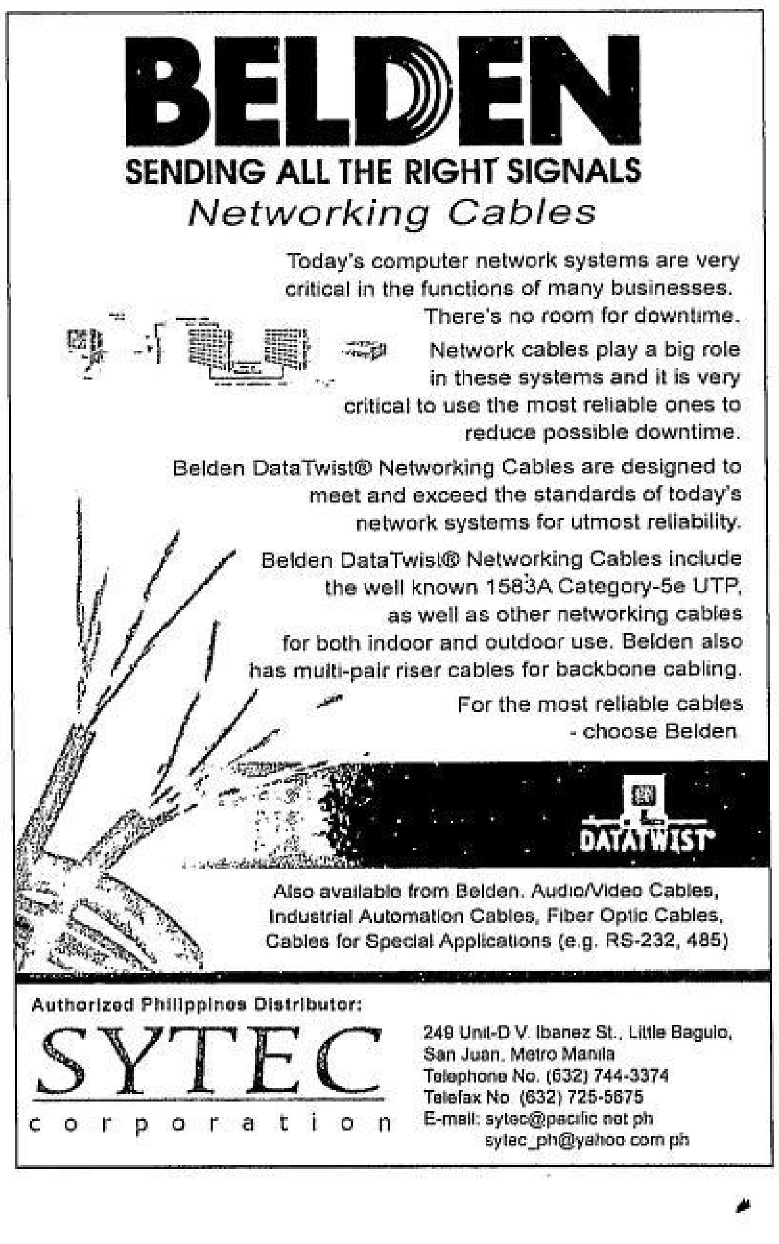

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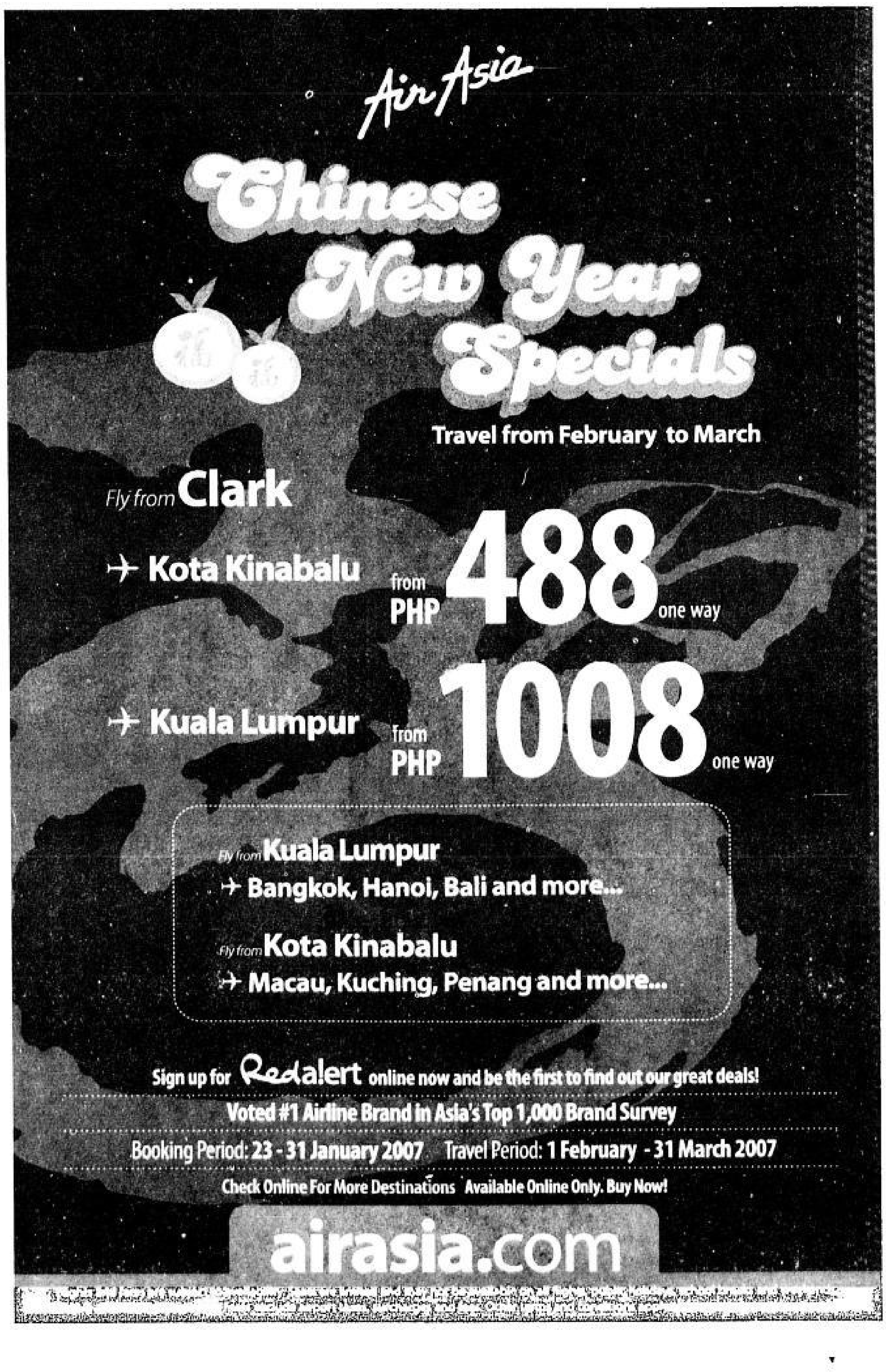

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GMA party could play football in chartered jet

By Nikko Dizon

IMAGINE THE COMFORT OF A LONG-HAUL flight with less than 60 co-passengers on a jumbo jet.

Yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo and her party of 52 took an Airbus 340 airplane, chartered from Philippine Airlines (PAL), for a 15-hour flight to Zurich in Switzerland to attend the World Economic Forum.

The airplane has a seating capacity of more than 300.

With so much space, airport observers quipped that the President's party could play football inside the aircraft.

Smallest delegation

A source told the INQUIRER that of the President's trips to Europe this was her smallest delegation.

First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo is the only member of the President's family accompanying her to Davos.

Members of her delegation include presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Presidential Security Group chief Col. Romeo Prestoza and Brig. Gen. Oscar Rabena.

The INQUIRER learned that six people, including the President and her husband, were seated in first class, five in business class, and the rest stayed in the economy section.

Malacañang charters PAL flights for the President's trips to Europe. One of the most notable was the trip to the Vatican in April 2005 when she paid her last respects to the late Pope John Paul II.

PAL does not have regular flights to Europe.

PAL PR 001 took off from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Centennial Terminal 2 shortly after 8 a.m.

She is scheduled to return on Sunday.

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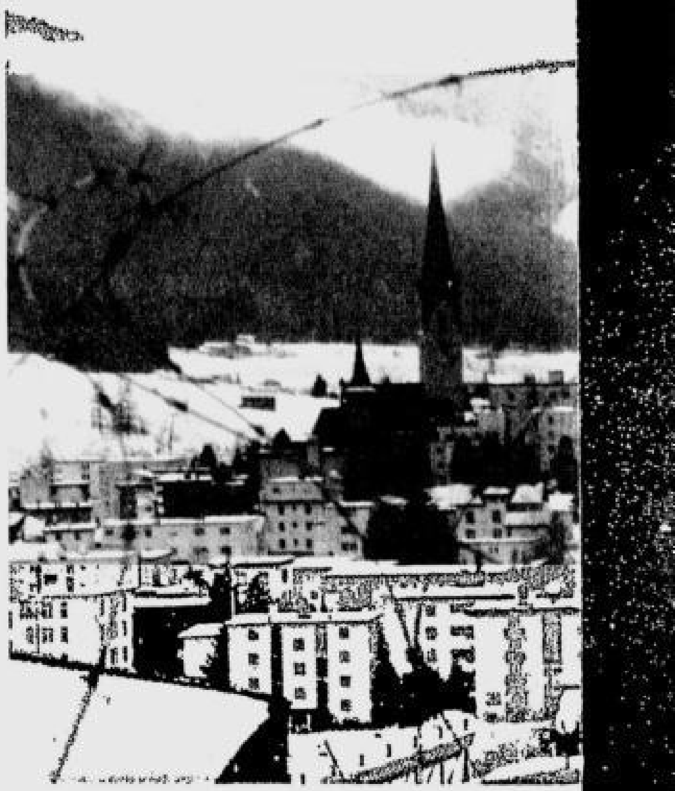
OFF TO DAVOS: President Arroyo boards a chartered PAL Airbus 340 to attend the World Economic Forum in the resort town of Davos, Switzerland. The President left with a party of 52 on a plane that accommodates more than 300 passengers. JESS YUSON



PICTURESQUE Swiss Alpine resort of Davos, the venue of the five-day World Economic Forum which began on Wednesday. REUTERS

GMA message RP ripe for mo

From page A1

was "a singular opportunity for her and the Philippines to address the major movers and shakers of the business world, political economy and civil society."

90 countries

Some 2,400 participants from 90 countries are participating in the meeting, including 24 heads of state, 85 Cabinet ministers, religious and media leaders and heads of nongovernment organizations.

Around half are business leaders from the forum's select membership, which comprises 1,000 top companies from around the world and across all economic fields.

The leaders include Eric Schmidt, chief executive officer of Google Inc., Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, chair and chief executive officer of Nestlé SA Switzerland, David R. Brennan, CEO of AstraZenica Plc United and William Gates III of Microsoft Corp.

Romulo said it was important for the business leaders to realize that the Philippines and the region were making significant strides in improving their economies.

He said the Philippines, in particular, was expected to post a 5.7-percent growth in gross domestic product this year due to good macroeconomic fundamentals.

Inflation has remained at single-digit levels and investors' confidence has gone up, which buoys expectations that the Philippines would be able to balance its budget, or raise enough revenues to cover expenses, as early as next year, Romulo said.

Riding high

The Philippines is also riding high on the successful staging this month of the Asean Summit in Cebu, where leaders pledged greater cooperation toward integrating their economies, in the same way that European nations created the European Union.

"[These developments] enable us to tell the major leaders that the Philippines is ripe for more trade and development," Romulo said.

Ms Arroyo will be joined in the session by Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila, Indonesian Trade Minister Mari Pangestu, Vietnamese Industry Minister Hoang Trung Hai, Asian Development Bank president Haruhiko Kuroda and Air Asia Malaysia CEO Anthony F. Fernandes.

Also joining them are Goanpot Asvinvichit, CEO of the Government Savings Bank of Thailand; Yoshihiko Morita, managing director of Japan Bank for International Cooperation; Govindasamy Rajasekaran, secretary general of the Malaysian Trade Union Congress, and Osamu Watanabe, CEO of the Japan External Trade Organization.

Asean's new future

Ms Arroyo will also discuss "Asean's 40 years—A New Future," together with Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung.

Facilitating the discussion is Michael J. Elliott, editor of Time International and the leaders, who will also be joined by Jusuf Wanandi, who will challenge the views to be presented by the three heads of state.

Wanandi is a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies of Indonesia and sits on its board.

Meeting with CEOs

Ms Arroyo was scheduled to arrive here yesterday at 6 p.m. (1 a.m. in Manila), and would first meet with Sicpa Holding SA chair Maurice Amon.

Sicpa, based in Lausanne, Switzerland, is one of the world's biggest players in the ink industry.

Swiss professor s

From page A1

led Schwab to create the European Managemen Forum, which changed its name to the World Economic Forum in 1987 and has been under the supervision of the Swiss Federal Government.

Locale makes for good security

The annual meeting hosted by the organization is attended by more than 2,000 business, religious, government, cultural and society leaders. Davos, a town in eastern Switzerland known for its relaxing climate, has been the traditional venue of the meeting.

The organization says that the town's alpine location makes it easier to address the security require-

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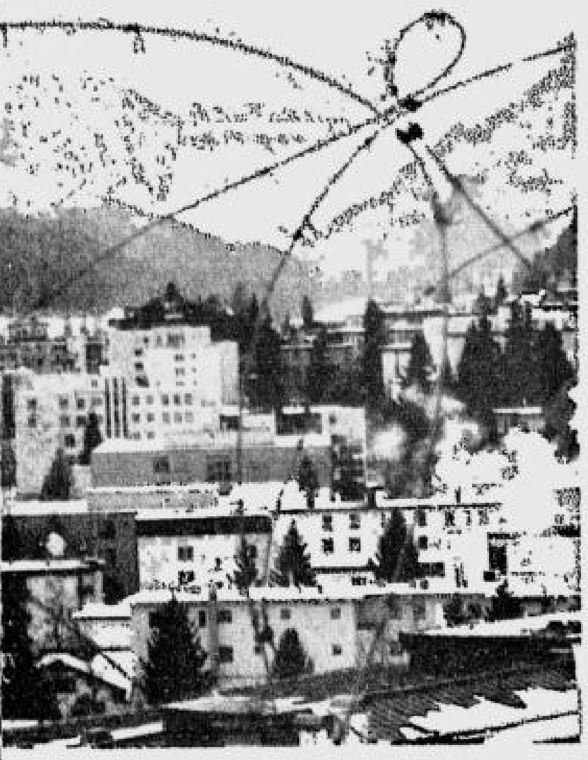
RP tycoons rate environment a priority



By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

DAVOS, SWITZERLAND (VIA PLDT)—Philippine business leaders have joined the ranks of a growing number of business, political and civil society leaders who believe that protecting the environment and finding solutions to halt global warming should be a priority.

Ayala Corp. chair Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II told the INQUIRER in a phone interview here that the issues of climate change and environmental protection were consistently ranking higher on the leaders' agenda over the past five years.

Zobel participated in the recent Voice of the Leaders Survey of the World Economic Forum, which indicated that the number of leaders, who ranked environmental protection as a priority for world leaders, more than doubled.

The WEF said in a statement here that as many as one in every five of the participants believed that leaders should concentrate on protecting the environment, compared with just 9 percent last year who rated environment issues as a priority.

Leaders' survey

The Voice of the Leaders survey asks participants the same questions relevant to the state of the world every year, to track changing priorities and perceptions on the same issues, which include safety, security and economic growth.

Zobel, who has been a member of the WEF since 1995 when he was named a Global Leader of Tomorrow, said the issue of climate change was "extremely relevant" to the Philippines because it was hit a few months ago by supertyphoons that caused massive loss of life and property and because of the general unpredictability of the weather.

"These affect not only the agriculture sector, but the infrastructure sector as well," he said.

Zobel added that people in general were still trying to grapple with the effects of global warming, although he sensed a marked increase in the desire to understand how to address the global issue.

Global warming refers to the gradual rise in the earth's temperature because of the increase in the level of the atmosphere's carbon dioxide, which traps heat.

During the last Ice Age, the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was only about 190 parts per million. Today, it has risen to 377 ppm.

Next generation

It is projected to go up even further to 600 ppm by 2100 if the current rates of economic growth are left unchecked, according to the briefing paper prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers for the WEF.

As leaders come to grips with the adverse effects of climate change, they have also expressed optimism that the next generation would live in a more prosperous world.

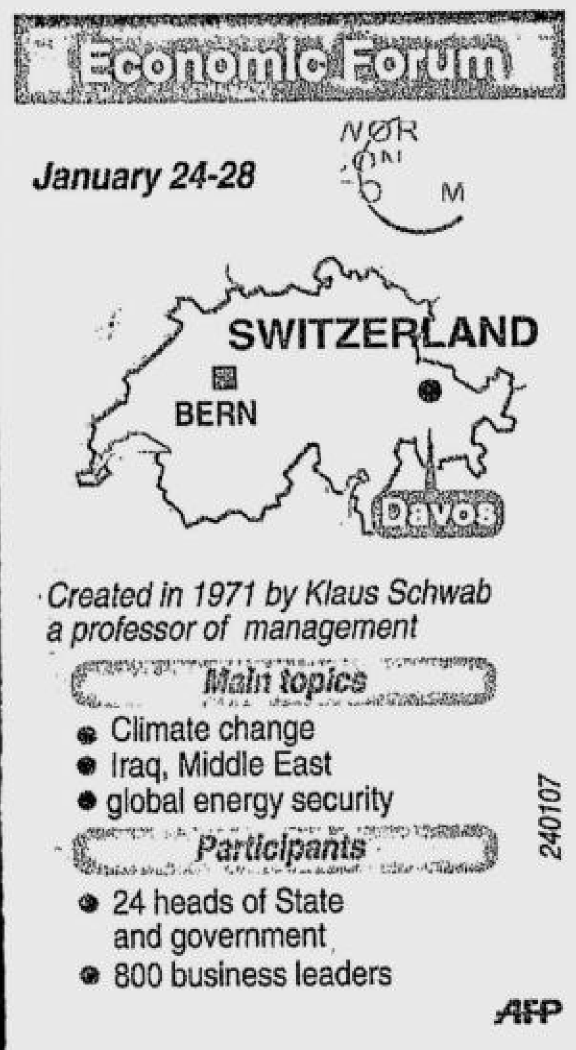
The survey indicated that the majority of leaders participating in the five-day annual meeting here believe that the next generation would live in a more economically prosperous world, with two-thirds (65 percent) thinking it will be a little or a lot more prosperous.

The same respondents, however, were pessimistic about security, with three out of five believing that the next generation would be living in a little or lot less safe world.

Zobel acknowledged that there were divisions in the world contributing to the view of a less safe world for the next generation, but said he personally wanted to build on the sense of optimism.

"For me, what is important is that higher sense of optimism on a global perspective," he said.

n Davos:
re trade



Created in 1971 by Klaus Schwab a professor of management

Main topics
- Climate change
- Iraq, Middle East
- global energy security

Participants
- 24 heads of State and government
- 800 business leaders

Ms Arroyo is scheduled to attend a breakfast hosted by Credit Suisse, after which she will have a 30-minute discussion with William Rhodes, chair, president and CEO of Citibank NA and executive vice chair of Citigroup.

Then it's off to meet with Klaus Schwab, the founder of the WEF.

Later in the day, she will take part in the discussion on Asean at the Congress Center.

Ms Arroyo will end the day with dinner with selected CEOs hosted by Sicpa chair Maurice Amon at the Hotel Belvedere.

On Saturday, Ms Arroyo is scheduled to meet with Prakash P. Hinduja, chair of Hinduja Group (Europe) and AMAS Bank (Switzerland) Ltd. and Kenneth Tuchman, chair and CEO of Teletech, which has a number of call centers in the Philippines.

Prince Andrew, too

It has also been confirmed that Prince Andrew, The Duke of York, will meet with Ms Arroyo just before lunch at the Arabella Sheraton Hotel Waldhuus.

Ms Arroyo will end her stay at the WEF with discussions with Craig R. Barret, chair of Intel Corp., and representatives from the Spanish firm Union Fenosa, which has a stake in Manila Electric Co.

In a statement before she left Manila, Ms Arroyo said she was going to the WEF "to represent the Philippines and Asean in our continuing quest for peace, goodwill, security and shared prosperity.".

"The Philippines lies in the nexus of one of the fastest growing regional economies, is a vibrant hub for global workers, and plays a strategic role in world trade and global security," she said.

Ms Arroyo said the Philippines would continue to seek ways "to provide the people with the best that the future can offer in terms of inward investments, jobs home and abroad and the goodwill and cooperation that enlarges the space for peace and prosperity on a level playing field."

tarted forum ...

ments of the event and allows attendees to focus more on the issues at hand.

At last year's meeting, among the issues discussed were the impact of sports on society and the launching of The Global Plan to Stop Tuberculosis. Some 25 trade leaders also agreed at the meeting to move on to key issues on agriculture, services, and manufacturing and to accelerate talks for a world trade deal.

With the theme "The Shifting Power Equation," this year's meeting will be attended by more than 2,400 people, some 800 of whom are chief executives and chairs—the highest number of business leaders since the meeting was launched. *Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research*

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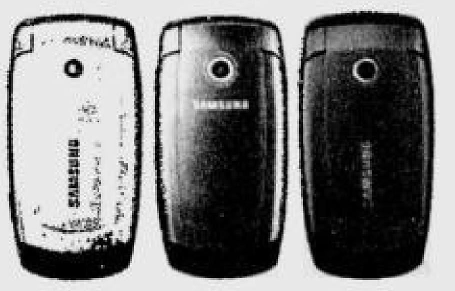

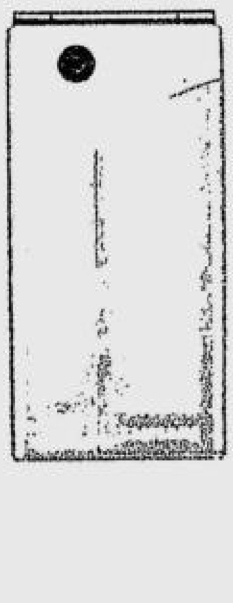
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Invisible people

EDITORIAL

THE INQUIRER SERIES ON AUTISM IS AN EYE-opener on a largely invisible sector in Philippine society. Perhaps because they have been treated with benign neglect by a society that cannot comprehend the complex dimensions of autism, these "special people" have practically been shunted aside in a world cozy in its "normalcy" and which chooses to ignore any behavior that goes against the grain or is, as social psychologists would say, "aberrant" or "deviant."

Autism turns its sufferers into outcasts. The condition has really different manifestations so that scientists and psychologists have come up with the phrase "autism spectrum disorders" (ASDs) to denote behaviors characterized by impairment in communication skills and social interactions, and restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior.

Civilizations have invariably responded to people afflicted with the disorders with a mixture of superstition and repulsion. It is safe to say that many of those committed to the asylum in the last centuries were not madmen but people afflicted with autism. In former days in the Philippines, people with autism were consigned to the family basement, forced to live their days in utter darkness as a family's worst-kept secret.

But people with ASDs now have come to light.

The fact that the media have slowly but steadily focused their spotlight on the phenomenon should indicate that Philippine society is coming to grips with autism. It cannot be otherwise because autism is a reality no one can ignore. The United States Department of Health and Human Services estimates that out of 1,000 children, two to six suffer from "pervasive development disorders," the other name for ASD. It is said that some 250,000 to 300,000 Filipinos have development disorders.

Although the disorders might have afflicted humanity since the dawn of time, it is only in the last century that medical scientists came up with a name for the disorder that causes family disruptions and even wasted lives. In 1943, the American doctor Leon Kanner introduced the phrase "early infantile autism" to explain the strange behavior of 11 children he had studied. At around the same time in Europe, Dr. Hans Asperger discovered a similar, though milder, disorder, which came to be known as Asperger syndrome. Today these two disorders are listed in the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders." If a child has symptoms of either disorders, but does not meet specific criteria for either, the diagnosis is called pervasive development disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS).

ASD is more common among the pediatric population. Parents and adults can easily spot possible indicators of ASD in a child: he does not babble, point, or make meaningful gestures by the first year; does not speak a word by 16 months; does not combine two words by two years; does not respond to names; and does not have language or social skills. Other indicators are poor eye contact, inability to play with toys, excessive tendency to line up toys or objects, inexplicable attachment to a toy or object, seeming inability to smile, and apparent hearing impairment.

Because they have trouble communicating, children with ASDs or PDDs may resort to tantrums to get what they want. Some may hurt themselves in frustration. Even if they hurt themselves, some may not cry because of reduced sensitivity to pain. Others, however, have an abnormal sensitivity to stimulation and may flinch at the slightest pain or even at parental caress.

Despite their condition, children with ASDs can develop into productive members of society as long as their affliction can be detected early and interventions are applied on time. Recent studies have shown that diagnosis of children at 2 years old and even less can still bring about changes. A child who was found to be "non-verbal" when he was 3 years old, can now, at age 13, talk and has been integrated in a regular class. He still has difficulty adjusting to social situations but the adjustment pains have been lessened because he can communicate.

It is because there's an urgency to raise awareness about ASDs and the need for early diagnosis and intervention that for the past 11 years the nation has been marking Autism Consciousness Week every Jan. 14 to 21. There has grown a national consciousness on autism, and initiatives and interventions have been made to respond better to the needs of people with ASDs. But much more must be done.

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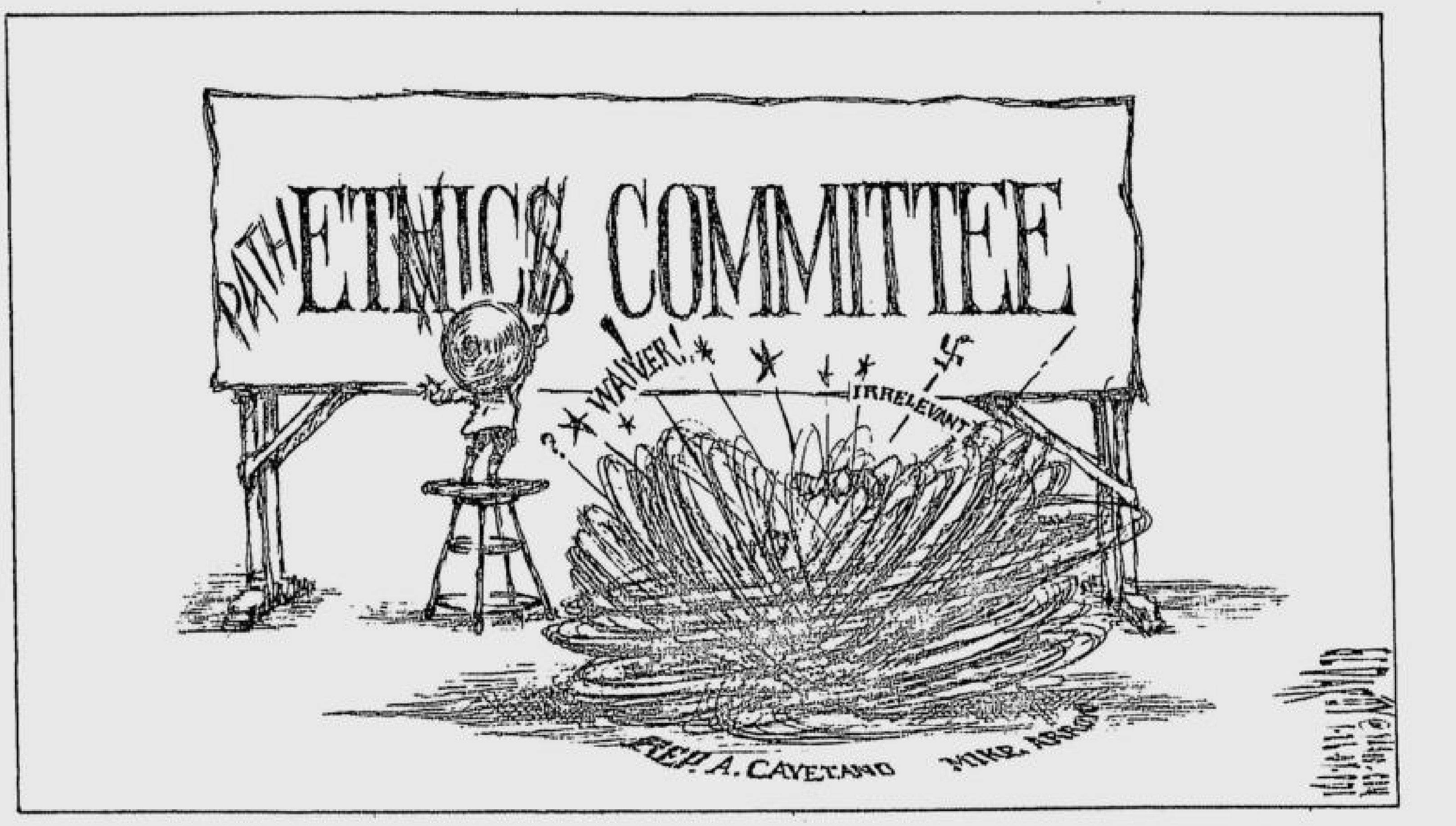


The controversy over the sale of PLDT shares

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE SALE THROUGH PUBLIC BIDDING OF 111,415 sequestered shares of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) has spawned another controversy. These shares, which have grown a hundred times due to consequent stock dividends over the years, was declared by the Supreme Court in January 2006 as part of the "ill-gotten wealth" of the Marcoses. The Court ordered their forfeiture to the government. Here is a background on these shares:

Under pressure to sell its controlling interest due to the 1969 expiration of the Laurel-Langley Agreement, the American-owned GTE sold its 26 percent share of PLDT's equity to the Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corp. (PTIC). The shares in question represent 46 percent of those PLDT shares, acquired by the group of Filipino businessmen led by the late Ramon Cojuangco. PTIC serves as the holding firm for the PLDT shares of the Cojuangco group.

In 1977, the US Securities and Exchange Commission claimed that then President Ferdinand Marcos had used several corporate layers to hide his financial stake in the ownership of PLDT shares. The first layer was PTIC, the second was Prime Holdings, a firm which was formed in 1977 by Rolando Gapud and Jose Campos Jr. Prime Holdings later became a major stockholder of PTIC, controlling 46 percent of PTIC.

In 1986, after the ouster of Marcos, the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) sequestered the equity of Prime Holdings. But the Presidential Commission on Good Government spared the shareholdings of the Cojuango family, Alfonso Yuchengco and Antonio Meer.

In 1999, the Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co., an investment firm owned by the Salim family of Indonesia, acquired the 54 percent equity, thus paving the way for the latter's control of PLDT.

On the other hand, the Prime Holdings shares underwent court litigation. At least four groups emerged as claimants: the Philippine government, the Marcoses led by Imelda (who claimed ownership of the entire PLDT controlling interest, saying that the Cojuangco group was a mere front for Marcos), the Cojuangcos, and the Yuchengcos.

In 2001, the Sandiganbayan ruled that the Prime Holdings shares belonged to the Cojuangcos. But in January 2006, the Supreme Court reversed the Sandiganbayan decision, ruling that they formed part of the Marcos "ill-gotten wealth." In late October, the Court dismissed all motions for reconsideration filed by the three claimant groups and ruled with finality that they were forfeited in favor of the government.

The PCGG then sold the PTIC shares through public bidding. The bidding was won by Singapore investment firm Parallax Capital Management. The rules said current stockholders have the right of first refusal. Therefore First Pacific and NTT DoCoMo of Japan, a minority stockholder, could buy those shares if they matched Parallax's winning bid. They announced that they intended to do just that.

Come now the points of controversy:

1. One side says the bidding was rigged to favor certain bidders; the public bidding was not announced.

The other side says the bidding was announced on Nov. 13, 2006 in invitations to bid published in three newspapers. Between Nov. 13 and 24, the invitation to bid was published a total of 15 times in seven different newspapers. Aside from the ads, the planned sale of the PTIC shares was reported repeatedly and extensively in the local media.

2. One side says the floor price was so low and only two bidders participated. The government stands to lose between P8 billion and P17 billion.

The other side says the Department of Finance believed that the shares were more valuable if they were sold as one block, rather than several blocks. With the estimated price at around P25 billion, very few parties, both local and foreign, have the funds to bid such a huge amount.

The floor price was set by taking the average trading price of PLDT shares during the 10 heaviest trading days of PLDT shares between Nov. 13 and Dec. 4, multiplying this by the number of PLDT shares to which the 111,415 shares in PTIC corresponded, and discounting this by 15 percent.

3. One side says that usually, a block sale of a major blue chip carries a premium ranging from 20 percent to 50 percent over its prevailing market price. But the PTIC shares were sold at a discount.

The other side says the PTIC shares are not the same as PLDT shares. PTIC shares are not easily tradable, can only be sold subject to a right to match which can take over 60 days to execute and do not come with direct voting rights in PLDT. Thus, PTIC shares are higher-risk, less liquid and less desirable investments than PLDT shares. It is therefore to be expected that they would trade at a discount.

4. One side says the 1987 Constitution limits foreign ownership in a telecommunications firm to 40 percent of total equity. First Pacific now holds almost 25 percent, while NTT DoCoMo has 15 percent. If the sale to them is consummated, foreign ownership could reach over 40 percent.

The other side says First Pacific and NTT DoCoMo have not yet matched the bid of winning bidder Parallax. The finance department is not aware that the Salim group owns Parallax. But even if it were true, and had the DOF known, there is no restriction against the participation of any financially capable entity, whether related to the First Pacific group or not.

NCAE: For when dreams exceed one's grasp

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

LAST WEEK, 1.8 MILLION HIGH SCHOOL seniors nationwide took the National Career Assessment Examination to find the match between their skills and career paths, in a job market that we scarcely control and in a culture where we value the diploma and not the learning. Nonetheless, the Department of Education has done well to initiate this exam, but there are hurdles to overcome along the way.

First, the parents. They are the educators' allies in every stage of schooling, except at the moment when the kids choose their careers. Then the hidden ambitions, the fallen dreams and the pent-up anxieties all surface. I recall the scene from "The Godfather 3," where Don Michael Corleone wanted his eldest son to be a lawyer, but the boy wanted to sing, well, the "Theme from the Godfather." Don Michael told him: Go to law school, become a lawyer, and then if you still want to sing, go ahead, but if your singing career doesn't work, then you have a profession to fall back on.

To borrow the words of Elton John, how many "sons of lawyers, sons of bankers" (and hereabouts, sons and daughters of doctors) will be forced into careers chosen by their parents? How can the NCAE avoid the mismatch between talent and ambition, when talent is merely God-given while ambition is parent-chosen? Guess who prevails.

Second, obsessions and stereotypes. There was a sharp increase in law school enrollments in the United States when the 1980s TV series "LA Law" first hit the screen. I haven't kept abreast of all the law- or medicine-related shows, but I imagine young kids being driven by idealized but rarely accurate images. Often, they see the creative and thus exciting part, but not the sheer drudgery of day-to-day life as, say, a law student or medical resident.

For medical schools, there are in fact two cases where applicants who flunked the National Medical Admission Test went all the way to the Supreme Court to assert their right to dream of becoming doctors. (They lost, the justices apparently scared to become one of their patients.) Fortunately, last week's NCAE poses no bar, no cut-off, no disqualification, and aims merely to guide and forewarn.

Third, diploma fetish. To his credit, Sen. Edgardo Angara, a former president of the University of the Philippines and long-time chair of the Senate committee on education, long ago pushed for the development of vocational and technological schools, a shift away from the fetish for universities and all they stand for—the glamour, the chic, the fancy-schmancy talk. In all candor, that is the world I know as a UP law professor, the same world that Angara knew too well as UP president. But I agree with him that what the Philippine economy needs are able men and women with practical skills to fill the jobs that industry demands. A Third World economy can use only so many men and women who can distinguish epistemology from epidemiology but can't change a flat tire.

Unfortunately, the Commission on Higher Education has created so many new universities, accommodating every politician who wants a university named after his *ninong*. In the United States, these "universities" would rank no better than community colleges or, at best, teaching colleges (more felicitously called "liberal arts colleges," of which there are fine examples). What the CHED needs is a higher vision of education. They just ain't got it.

Fourth, the job market and the ever-moving goalposts. It is difficult enough to develop an exam to find a kid's job aptitude, but try predicting what jobs he can aim for once he graduates. Ten years ago who would have thought that there would be a market for those who can talk like DJs, those who can affect an American accent? Come to think of it, the *coño* kids cornered the market for *colegiala* and *colegialo* English, the clipped singsong that the educated Pinoy passed off for true class. Until, that is, the call centers exposed it as the patois of the *burgis* wanna-be.

On the same day that the papers reported the NCAE, the headlines also blared, "China next major destination of Filipino workers," and, mind you, they referred to high-skilled labor like doctors, nurses, engineers, architects, lawyers and accountants, all poised to partake of China's economic boom. The other lead story was, "9 out of 10 Singaporeans fear losing jobs to foreigners."

If the DepEd wants to program the supply of Filipino labor to meet the demand, it cannot limit itself to the Philippine market. For instance, we are stuck with so many "universities," which are in turn fed by OFW remittances. Let us make the best of the situation and cultivate the market abroad for the artistic and creative Pinoy. Let us find a niche in those societies that had been so repressed that they turn to other nations for work that requires imagination and color. Surely those of us who thrive amid chaos can make money out of those among them who can't.

I know a young boy from a poor family who, to my delight, qualified as a Physics major in UP. But he eventually dropped out, and when I asked his father why, apparently the boy had some difficulty in his sophomore year, lost his scholarship and, in order to re-enroll, was required to refund his earlier subsidies, a legal way of saying, "Get lost." Last I heard, he was working in a factory, possibly a future Filipino J. Robert Oppenheimer sentenced to the assembly line.

Maybe it has less to do with aptitude and more to do with fate, and when it comes to our common destiny, I join Mao in saying, "Seize the day, Seize the hour."

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Third Force: rumblings of a shake-up

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

A THIRD FORCE MOVEMENT HAS EMERGED, with a strong undercurrent challenging attempts to polarize the May mid-term election into a vote of confidence for President Macapagal-Arroyo or for former President Joseph Estrada, whom she deposed in 2001.

The movement is a revolt against the throwback of a settled issue—the legality of Ms Arroyo's takeover of the presidency in People Power II—to the electoral arena as its dominant issue in the May 2007 election.

Third force movements are not a novelty in Philippine post-war elections. They gained currency in the 1957 presidential election contested by four candidates: two from the mainstream parties, incumbent President Carlos P. Garcia of the Nacionalista Party and Jose Yulo of the Liberal Party, and two from the third force movement, Sen. Manuel P. Manahan of the Progressive Party of the Philippines and Sen. Claro M. Recto of the Nationalist-Citizens Party. Benefiting from the four-way split of the vote, Garcia won, but the results prefigured the fate of subsequent third force movements bucking the pre-martial law two-party system and appearing in the multi-party system following the 1986 People Power Revolution.

Despite these failures of third force movements, the current movement represents the rumblings of disenchantment and loss of confidence in the multi-party system as the framework within which political reform can be worked out. It seeks a shake-up of the selection process in the Senate elections, wresting it from the hands of party hacks.

More significantly, it is an expression of protest against attempts to covert the May election into a grudge fight between Ms Arroyo and Estrada. This polarization blurs a number of issues facing the Arroyo administration as it seeks a fresh mandate of legitimacy, including her strong-arm method of rule, her trampling of political rights, her policies and priorities involving constitutional change and the communist insurgency, abuse of power and the persistent stigma of unresolved corruption issues, not to mention the issue of legitimacy stemming from the notorious Garcillano tapes.

The renascent third force is protesting the rigging and narrowing of the issues of the May election by the administration and groups claiming to represent the opposition in the formation of their tickets for the Senate election. Two alignments are shaping up, one formed by the administration's Lakas coalition, and the other, by the so-called United Opposition (UNO), in which Estrada is trying arbitrarily to call the shots on who should be in the UNO lineup.

These two camps are not political parties as such. They represent two loose and shifting coalitions of parties and individuals undefined by contrasting political and social programs. They identify the election issue, according to whether their candidates are pro- or anti-administration, leaving voters in the dark on what basis to vote or reject them.

Somewhere between these two main coalitions is a floating but politically consequential body which does not want to be caught in the trap of these two extremes and yet is being wooed by both. One such group that spearheads the reformist third force movement is made up of incumbent senators and ex-senators, whose inclusion in the contending tickets is uncertain in the capricious hands of the coalition convenors. They are uncomfortable being identified as Estrada cohorts or allies of Ms Arroyo, against whom they have issues to raise. Among these are Senate President Manuel Villar, Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, Senators Ralph Recto, Edgardo Angara and Joker Arroyo. These persons have proven national electoral constituencies and drawing power; and there are reasons to believe that they can form the nucleus of a third force in the senatorial election, not being part of either the administration or UNO lineup and not dependent on them.

They may not be able to field a full ticket of 12, but they don't share common issues with the UNO or the Lakas configuration. For example, Villar represents the Nacionalista Party, Pangilinan, the Liberal Party wing of Sen. Franklin Drilon, and Angara heads the LDP, the largest opposition party. They have the parties with the political machinery down to the local level that can bring them to the Senate without riding the vehicles of Lakas or UNO. The sad thing is that they seem unaware of their strength.

Against these established parties, UNO is a phantom organization without provincial troops or even local election inspectors. It only boasts of Estrada's minuscule Partido ng Masang Pilipino. It was Angara's LDP that gave Estrada the nationwide political machine in the 1998 election. UNO is daydreaming that it can get a free ride on Villar's NP, Angara's LDP and Drilon's LP by poaching in their ranks.

The third force personalities mentioned above are targets of UNO and administration head-hunting to fill vacancies in their senatorial lineups. They have the political muscle to draw up their own lineup, albeit not a full slate. They are sitting in a no-man's land between two camps, which seek to use them while giving them subordinate status in their lineups, making them appear like mendicants whose inclusion in their respective tickets depends on the whims of powerbrokers.

The function of a third force is to act as the catalyst of reform and change that can make the administration honest and the opposition relevant. The third force cannot, and should not, aspire to make a clean sweep of the Senate. It has to make its presence and clout felt as an agent of change.

'Mameng' in the menu

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THERE WAS A TEMPEST IN E-MAIL CIRCLES, or at least the e-mail circles I move in, regarding the serving of "mameng" or the Napoleon wrasse in Manila restaurants. "Mameng" is a rare fish whose flesh is especially tasty, making it a most desired item among gourmets, especially patrons of Chinese restaurants.

The mameng issue arose from the arrest of the captain and crew of the Chinese vessel Hoi Wan which was found in Tubbataha Reef with more than a hundred mameng in tanks in its hold. This was enough to arrest and hold the crew because mameng is an endangered fish protected by an international treaty.

The news updates on the Hoi Wan incident, as well as on the fate of the mameng, which were supposed to be released back into their habitat, led to reports about restaurants in Manila that carry mameng on their menus.

Portico, a restaurant at Serendra at The Fort, was the first establishment to be named. Portico, which is part of the Chateau group of restaurants (including Sentro in Greenbelt 3 and Chateau in the Ortigas area) was reported to carry a mameng dish on its menu of offerings.

When his attention was called to the endangered status of mameng, Portico co-owner Ricky Gutierrez immediately acted and wrote an e-mail to all concerned that they would no longer be serving mameng in Portico or any of their restaurants.

Subsequent e-mail reports then named North Park, a chain of Chinese cafés, as another restaurant serving mameng. On the same day the e-mail reports circulated, customers of North Park contacted the owners and, like the owners of Portico, they immediately decided to take the fish off their menu.

* * *

OTHER restaurants also on the mameng "watch list" are Gloria Maris, which banners shark's fin dishes on their marquee despite a campaign among environmentalists to bring an end to the shark's fin trade because of the dwindling number of sharks, and the Chinese restaurant at the Century Park Hotel. WWF-Philippines head Lory Tan reports that as of this writing, mameng remains on their menus.

I happened to have lunch at the Gloria Maris outlet in Greenbelt 2 last Wednesday, and when the waiter laid a dish of steamed fish before us, I jokingly asked the waiter if the fish was a mameng. He vehemently denied this, but conveniently failed to mention that mameng was on their menu, if the e-mail reports are indeed true. (Our host at that lunch did the ordering, and so I never saw the menu.)

This teaches me to peruse the menus of restaurants I'm dining in (even if I'm not paying) to check if they serve endangered species. If pressure from the dining public and faithful customers won't work, Tan wants to know if legal action will do the trick.

"Mere possession of this live fish is a crime under Philippine laws," he reminds. "Readers are enjoined to submit the names of food establishments that they have personally seen offering mameng or other protected species. Public pressure is only a first step, but it can make all the difference."

The issue, he says, is not just political (or environmental) correctness or even personal squeamishness. "Close to 40 million Filipinos depend on seafood as their primary source of protein," he points. "The presence and vitality of Napoleon wrasse populations in our reefs help maintain reef biodiversity and productivity. Environmental crime is not the main issue here. The issue is food, for a booming Philippine population."

* * *

THE LESSON in this e-mail tempest, then, is that despite the larger, macro aspect of environmental issues, there are some things all of us can do at the micro individual level. Whether it involves checking restaurant menus for endangered species, segregating our garbage, or opting for cleaner sources of energy, individual choices and actions, if taken collectively, will have an impact even on major environmental problems.

Here's another thing you can do at a personal level: Don't watch the ongoing "dolphin show" at SM Mall of Asia.

Two NGOs—PAWS, an animal welfare group, and the Earth Island Institute—recently met with the show's organizers to communicate some of their concerns. Among these were their observations that the dolphins weren't receiving enough protection from the sun, especially from noon to about 3 p.m.; the animals were being made to swim in a cramped tank "not even one ten thousandth of one per cent of the marine mammals' normal habitat size"; sea lions were kept in pens "only as big as their own bodies"; and the animals are being "overworked," with five performances every day.

The animal welfare groups are calling on the public not to patronize traveling dolphin shows, and on corporations not to sponsor such events because, they say, such shows encourage the capture of dolphins from the wild. Captive sea mammals are also subjected to unusual and cruel stress, including the use of chlorinated water that eventually blinds the creatures.

"Dolphins are dying to amuse you," the groups declare.

* * *

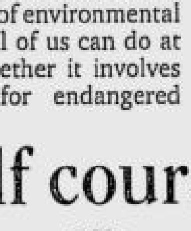
TOMORROW, Saturday, Jan. 27, friends of Chin-Chin Gutierrez will stage "an evening of music, dance, poetry and visual art" to raise funds to help her bounce back from a double tragedy: the death of her mother and the destruction by fire of her home, in which she lost all her material possessions.

The fundraiser begins at 7 p.m. at Bliss Café with the opening of "Sipat," a collection of photographs by Budo de Guzman, then moves to Ayuyang Bar at 9 p.m. for an artists' jam, "Out of the Ashes," with folk artists, live Indian music, poetry and spoken word readings, including poems written by Chin-Chin, and a classical Balinese dance performance. Tickets at P200 each are available at the door.

The oldest golf course

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



ON A FLIGHT TO ILOILO RECENTLY, I WAS SURprised to find former President Fidel V. Ramos in the economy section with me. Everyone wondered why Ramos was not upgraded to the business class section, which was half-full. Surely, he was more of a VIP or "VVIP" than the members of the fact-finding mission investigating the police siege of the Iloilo Capitol.

Ramos did not seem to mind. He carried his own bag, unlike the trying-hard VIPs with aides in dark glasses carrying their things. Ramos did not travel with security. He clowned around, and gamely posed for souvenir pictures. Passengers who saw him on a crummy aisle seat, two rows from the toilets, saw a man who was sure of himself, someone who by example demonstrated what true VIPs are like.

The sight of citizen Ramos that day also showed me what it is like to be out of power. When this man was president everyone crowded around him. Where are half of those people today?

Ramos traveled to Iloilo to play a round of golf in what has recently been acknowledged as the oldest existing golf course in the Philippines: the former Santa Barbara Golf and Country Club that has been known as the Iloilo Golf and Country Club since 1947.

Of course, there are other more famous clubs, like the Muni (short for Municipal) Golf course around Intramuros, Manila Golf (in Makati), Wack-Wack in Mandaluyong and, of course, the Baguio Country Club, which celebrated its centennial last year. All these clubs have golf courses that were set up after that in Iloilo.

It seems that in 1907, British engineers of the Philippine Railway Co. decided to play golf in Santa Barbara, a town about 15 km from Iloilo City. The American colonial government had planned a railway in Panay that would run from Iloilo to Capiz (now Roxas City), but what got established in the process was the golf course. One thread that requires further research is that Englishmen who worked in railroad construction in the Philippines were into golf. When Ramos told me that there was an old but underdeveloped golf course in Pangasinan, I wondered whether this could be linked to the construction of the Manila-Dagupan Railway.

The original course was a crude nine-hole field of about 2,000 yards close to the railway construction site. It is said that Scots were the first golfers there, and the other British railway engineers followed suit. We don't know their backgrounds but three of the founding members were John Grieve, G. Alexander and a certain E. Black, who helped design Wack-Wack. A club grew out of the golf course and, of course, this was exclusive to expats in the beginning, but by 1920, Filipinos were allowed to join the club. Some prominent members were Tomas Confesor and the Lopez brothers, Eugenio and Fernando.

This club was also the first Philippine-based golf club accepted as an affiliate of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club in Scotland which was established in 1754 and is now considered the mother of all golf clubs. And to further validate its position as the oldest golf club, they have managed to preserve some memorabilia like beat-up trophies, silver cups like one given out by General Motors in 1927 and six ancient golf balls found in the water hazard during dredging operations in 1980. Two of these are rubber "gutta percha" golf balls of unique design. One is a Spalding, and the other a Wright Ditson, but what makes a historian or archeologist swoon is one that is marked "Pat. April 11, [18]99."

I gave up golf many years ago because I could not wake up early enough to play a round with my parents, particularly my mother who played at dawn to avoid sunburn. Visiting this golf club made me reconsider a return to the driving range first and the golf course later so I can try and win some research money playing with FVR.

Filipinos are a sport-loving people and I wouldn't be surprised if there will be research to establish the beginnings of basketball, sipa, badminton, swimming, or football. So far, golf already has its place in history and the next thing to do would be to find out if there were historical events that happened in particular golf courses. For example, there was the failed assassination attempt on Jose P. Laurel in Wack-Wack. Then there were historical people who played golf. How did they play? What was their handicap?

What about those who are remembered for playing badly? For example, I have never attempted to tee off in Baguio Country Club Hole No. 1, fearful of the spectators having breakfast or lunch at the verandah. How about incidents that can get you a prize for funny videos? A Japanese academic gifted me with an NHK video documentary on the Philippines, and from what I could make out from the pictures rather than the sound, it had something to do with Philippine society in the post-Marcos or Cory Aquino period. The only part I enjoyed and understood was the part showing Fernando Zobel de Ayala doing a butterfly on film and having it recorded for posterity.

History, it seems, can be found in the most unlikely places. It may not always be about battles, massacres and the (mis)deeds of great men but also about the establishment of golf courses or even restaurants.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Dancing nerds

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

IT WAS A CHRISTMAS REUNION AND I THOUGHT I'D share the good news with Fr. Danny Huang, the Jesuit boss in the Philippines. "Did you hear?" I told him. "Xavier won first prize in a street dance competition."

Father Danny was incredulous but his nephew Mikey, a high school junior at Xavier, confirmed the news.

I, too, could not believe the news when I first read about it in the papers. Xavier kids dancing, and dancing well? I studied at Xavier (as did Father Danny) and remember the ordeals of going through our high school soirees and proms. It was tough enough dealing with the female of the species, most of whom came from the school about 100 meters away from Xavier but who might as well have come from another galaxy. Even worse, we were told we had to do dance with these strange creatures, and that included fast ones as well as slow ones, the ones to which you counted one-two-three, one-two-three until you tripped on your own feet.

It just didn't seem right for Xavier kids to dance. We romped off with awards in spelling bees and debating contests and typewriting competitions and we could boast about knowing how to diagram English sentences and using the abacus, but dance?

Eventually, we retreated into a comfortable, learned helplessness, feigning disdain, if not contempt, for such a mundane and banal activity. No, there were better things for Xavier people to do, like making money and making more money (except for a few silly ones who insist on teaching or writing columns). We were nerds, and we were proud of it.

Double shock

Mikey assured Father Danny and me that Xavier's dancing kings weren't airheads, as the stereotypes go, so what has happened is that they're proving nerds can dance. Not only that, miracle of miracles, these are Chinese-Filipino nerds, running counter again to the stereotypes that Chinese genes produce two left feet.

There's more to this dancing nerds phenomenon. A few nights after I read about Xavier's victory, I happened to be surfing cable television when suddenly, on ETC, there it was, excerpts from the Skechers Streetdancing Battle II. Perfect, I thought, so maybe I'll catch the Xavier kids dancing. Turned out there were quite a few schools competing, and they were dancing to a packed audience in what looked like the Araneta Coliseum. This was major league dancing.

In the college division, three UP campuses had participated—Los Baños, Manila and Diliman—and they were all good. The high schools eventually got their turn and I caught the Xavier troupe catapulting and somersaulting and—hey, did that look like dragon-dancing? I was watching only excerpts, not even a minute long, but what I saw was quite impressive.

Finally, they got around to announcing the winners. In the high school division, it was Colegio de Santa Rosa-Makati in 3rd place and Colegio de San Juan de Letran in 2nd place. To keep the audience in suspense, the hosts went on to announce the winners of the college division: UP Manila came in 3rd, and Mapua-Makati was 2nd.

With the audience's adrenaline all revved up, it was time to announce the grand champions. For high school, yes, it was Xavier, and for college it was . . . UP Diliman.

UP Diliman? And I heard, for the second year in a row? What's the world coming to? It must be the effect of climate change, or instant noodles.

Maybe I missed it, but I didn't see these victories written up in the Collegian or the UP Newsletter. I don't know, but for days I walked head high, wishing I could wear a T-shirt that said, in front, "Graduate of Xavier School. . . Skechers Street Dance Champion" and at the back, "Faculty, UP Diliman, Skechers Street Dance Champion too." I had visions of overcoming my learned helplessness, of choreographing a new number, with a Pinoy rock version of "UP Naming Mahal" (played of course by Edru Abraham and his Kontra Gapi), at the next graduation ceremony.

Seriously now. Confession time: The College of Social Sciences and Philosophy did allow a street dance number during our college recognition ceremonies some years back. It got mixed reviews. Some people thought it was inappropriate while others, myself included, found it a refreshing change.

I like this idea of dancing Xavier nerds and dancing UP *iskolar ng bayan* (people's scholars). It doesn't have to be streetdancing; it can be any kind of body movement, any kind of letting go. It helps us to break stereotypes about good students being strait-laced bookworms. My Yna loves books, but she loves to dance as well, and I know my parents have mixed feelings about that.

As I wrote before in another column, Chinese-Filipino families don't think too highly about dancing, and are horrified when they see other families calling their children out to dance for visitors. But I assure them it's healthy for the kids to dance, and that someday they'll probably get their Ph.D.s, and still enjoy dancing. I point to Dr. Mary Racelis, one of the country's most respected social scientists and a member of our anthropology department, who at 75 still dances a mean tango.

What happens is that we force our children into pigeonholes: this one the athlete, the other the computer engineer, that one the surgeon, each with boundaries: "You're good with books, but you'll never be good at dancing or playing a musical instrument."

Give me time to figure out what it is in Xavier and UP that produces good dancers. I thought of the Jesuit training in Xavier, but then Ateneo didn't win in the high school or college competitions. And UP? I don't think it's the *iskolar ng bayan* bit. Ever the liberal, I've wondered if it's simply giving space to young people, teaching them to defy stereotypes, to use their imagination, to dare to be different, even as we try to balance individual achievements with learning to work, creatively, in groups. It's not surprising UP's chorale groups are running off with awards in international competitions.

The challenge is to allow young people to develop "multiple intelligences." It's developing someone in a direction that they seem to be strong in, without suppressing their other potentials.

It's a process we might want to start in our own homes even with toddlers. Yes, we could have a bookworm who loves science experiments but who also dances, and maybe who dances even better than others precisely because, as a nerd, she sees details others don't, or hears music in a way that produces a different rhythm, a different choreography.

Multiple intelligences amplify each other. Those good dancers just might become better physicists as well, or molecular biologists, or anthropologists. Free spirits mean free, bold minds that dare to be both inquisitive and imaginative—essential ingredients for good, excellent, science.

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Parallel importation of drugs poses danger to public health

I WISH TO JOIN THE PUBLIC DEBATE on the proposed bill (Senate Bill No. 2263) which seeks to allow the parallel importation of drugs, particularly from India. (PDI, 1/23/07) It is assumed that allowing parallel importation is risk-free and, at the same time, will reduce drug prices in the country.

The truth, however, is that both assumptions have not been proven true. Worse, the bill, if passed into law, might just prove the opposite. I am afraid that the bill might just expose the very people it aims to protect to more risks. The Filipino people deserve to be informed of those risks.

Sweet and simple slogans should not be used to cover up the risks inherent in the proposal. Legalizing the parallel importation of medicines by just any person could be potentially hazardous to public health. In a country with inadequate resources and regulatory controls, parallel importation could open up more opportunities for the insertion of counterfeit products into a complicated distribution chain involving several wholesalers and brokers—like what the Philippines has. It is often virtually impossible to tell with the naked eye the difference between real and fake medicines.

In sum, the proposed bill may surrender what is paramount—protection of public health—for what is populist. It sacrifices safety for affordability.

—DR. ALEXANDER C. CABUNGCAL, MD, DLSMC,
Dasmariñas, Cavite

Study on cell sites inconclusive

THIS REFERS TO THE LETTER OF Sean H. Dado, regarding cell sites. (PDI, 1/5/07) For RFR (radio frequency radiation) facilities, such as cell sites (also called mobile phone base stations), the Bureau of Health Devices and Technology (BHDT) of the Department of Health does a desktop evaluation using technical data on the facility submitted by the applicant-company. An RFR safety evaluation report is then issued. The company submits this report to the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) and to the local government.

An RFR evaluation has been done on the cell site in Dado's subdivision and reported. Our report shows that the minimum safe distance is 0.40 in front of a microwave antenna, and 3.40 meters in front of a cellular antenna. Since these antennas are installed at the edges of tall towers, a person will be exposed to RFR at harmful levels **only** if he/she climbs a ladder as tall as the tower and stays directly in front of the antennas at **less than the distances indicated above and at the same level as the antennas.** The RFR safety evaluation report is valid unless modifications have been made that can affect the power density levels in the facility.

On the health effects of cell site radiation:

1. A cell site does not emit X-rays, alpha rays, beta rays, or gamma rays. X-rays are produced by an X-ray machine while alpha, beta and gamma rays are emitted by radioactive materials.

2. A cell site uses antennas which emit RFR and microwave radiation. The proven effects of RFR and microwaves are thermal or heating effects which could lead to cataracts, skin burns, deep burns, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. However, these effects will not occur if a person keeps a safe distance in front of the antennas.

3. The BHDT study done in 2000 titled "Determination of Radiofrequency Radiation Levels Around Selected Cellular Base Stations in the National Capital Region" shows that RFR levels around cellular base stations are below the RFR risk levels set by the DOH, based on the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection's exposure restrictions (reference levels).

4. The latest World Health Organization Fact Sheet No. 304 dated May 2006, titled "Electromagnetic Fields and Public Health Base Stations and Wireless Technologies," states that "From all evidence accumulated so far, no adverse short- or long-term health effects have been shown to occur from the RF signals produced by base stations."

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Still hoping to be 'Valiant'

THAT WAS A GREAT PIECE ABOUT Daisy Avellana in the Jan. 22 issue of the INQUIRER. May I add my own personal item about her.

In 1941, when Daisy Hontiveros and Lamberto Avellana were newlyweds, the College of the Holy Spirit or CHS (then Holy Ghost College) was designated by the archbishop to produce and direct the "Mission Play" for that year. CHS asked Lamberto to handle the project.

He asked Daisy to write the play, and Daisy wrote "And One Was Valiant." This was about a Tingguian princess who was converted to Christianity, but when the tribe heard about it, the tribal princess was asked to renounce her new religion. She wouldn't, so they stoned her to death.

The Avellana couple went to each of the high school classes at CHS to pick the girl who would play Li-ana. And I guess I was Tingguian enough to be chosen to play that role.

For two nights at the Ateneo's Padre Faura auditorium, I was "stoned" to death, ending up lying on the floor with a lot of catsup.

Nobody, perhaps not even Daisy, remembers it now, but for over 50 years I have relived that role, hoping again and again that I may truly become "And One Was Valiant."

—EUGENIA DURAN-APOSTOL,
Mr. & Ms. editor
and Inquirer founder

Customs 'alligators' at airport

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE ARTICLE, "Filipino deployment abroad exceeds 1M target—labor dept." This means ever-increasing dollar remittance, right? And more dollar remittances mean a stronger economy for our country.

But when we come home for a short visit, what do the Bureau of Customs officials do to us at the airport? They pretend to inspect our luggage and try to keep us at the counter, asking some silly questions, waiting for a dole. Once, they took three bags of chocolates from my luggage against my will.

And when it's time to go back to our host countries, we can't be exempted from paying travel tax unless we show proof of payment of PhilHealth and OWWA fees.

Is it not ironic that while we are the ones keeping the economy afloat, the government we are helping cannot be more considerate?—**Tasha Poschor, Thailand (via e-mail)**

* * *

My brother was also a victim of those "alligator" customs officials at the airport last Jan. 17. He had an OWWA ID, but the "alligator" people kept asking for the receipt for the ID card.

Wasn't that nonsense? It turned out that the "alligators" only needed a "*padulas*." We had no time for discussion and arguing, so my father gave them the money. I think part of the money went to their boss.

People like those should be fired. If this will continue, many overseas Filipino workers and their families will lose trust in our country.—**John Dilao, Ermita, Manila (via e-mail)**

* * *

As usual, the opposition is not offering any real alternatives in this year's elections. For example, the senators are fielding their immediate relatives to run for the Senate. Have they no shame, the Estradas, especially? And, to my disappointment, the Cayetanos and the Pimentels, too. I thought they still had what most have lost: *delicadeza*.

Perhaps they are doing it for love of country, but for practical purposes, wouldn't it be better for our gridlock-prone Congress that, since Tatay (or Nanay or Kuya or Ate) is already in the Senate, that "*anak*" (or kid bro) would stay in the house to ensure a less acrimonious relationship between the two chambers of Congress?

INQUIRER.NET VOICES

I wish our young politicians would have real moral backbone and not succumb easily to the ways of their "*trapo*" elders.—**Paul Trinidad, Rome (via e-mail)**

* * *

Are there no people more qualified other than actors, actresses and incarcerated criminals to run the government? I think people who are in jail should be banned from running for public office. It is time to change our Constitution regarding qualifications of aspirants to public office.—**Dominador Arca, New Jersey (via e-mail)**

* * *

It is time for the so-called "*masa*" to understand the real state of mind of the Estradas, the Cayetanos, the Pimentels and the many "*trapo*" and political dynasties that continue to trample on the national welfare with their perverted sense of self-righteousness. What a disgrace, indeed, if we have three Estradas, two Cayetanos and father and son Pimentels in the Senate!

We should all say NO! NO! NO! NO to "*trapo*"!—**Elmer Caseles, Naga City (via e-mail)**

* * *

As an American, I am ashamed of the action the United States government took in getting rapist Daniel Smith transferred to US custody. I personally think he should do his time in the Philippine corrections system for raping the young girl.

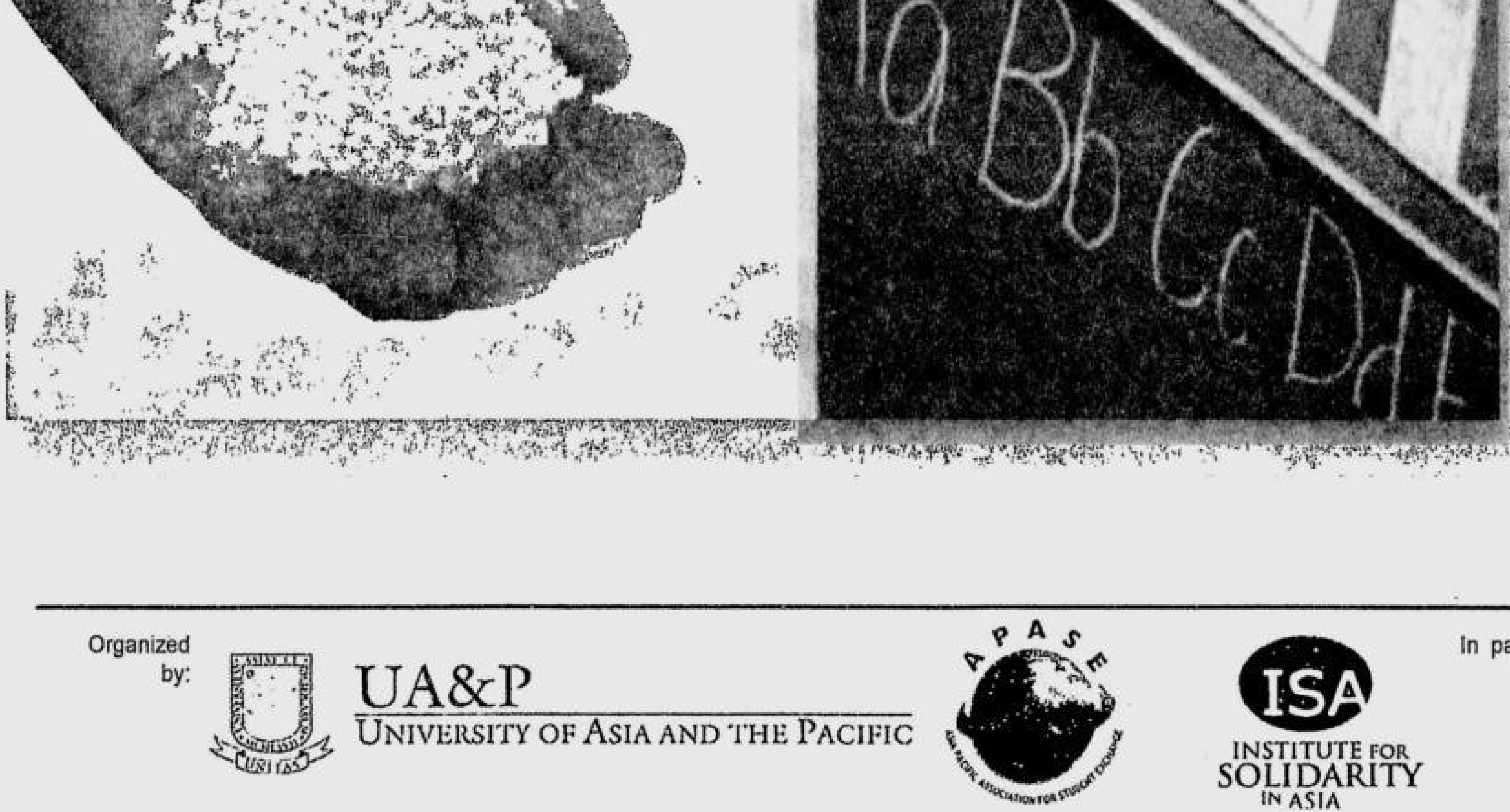
It is a disgrace to our men and women in uniform to have a rapist among them.—**Oliver Pugh, 104 Liles St., Brewton, Alabama, USA (via e-mail)**

* * *

Shame on the judge who presided over the Subic rape case and shame on "Nicole"! *Bakit kayo nagpadala sa* leftists and Gabriela?

It is so obvious that "Nicole" willingly went bar-hopping and willingly went with Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith. She regretted having sex with him and cried rape because the soldier thought she was a prostitute.

Would a decent Filipina go to a pickup place where foreigners abound? The silent majority actually thinks Smith is innocent.—**Jennifer Dimayuga, Malate, Manila (via e-mail)**



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DOJ drops raps vs Chinese poachers

PUERTO PRINCESA City—Local authorities yesterday said Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez ordered the provincial prosecutor's office on Monday (Jan. 22) to drop the cases of poaching and use of explosives and toxic substances against the 24 Chinese poachers caught in October last year.

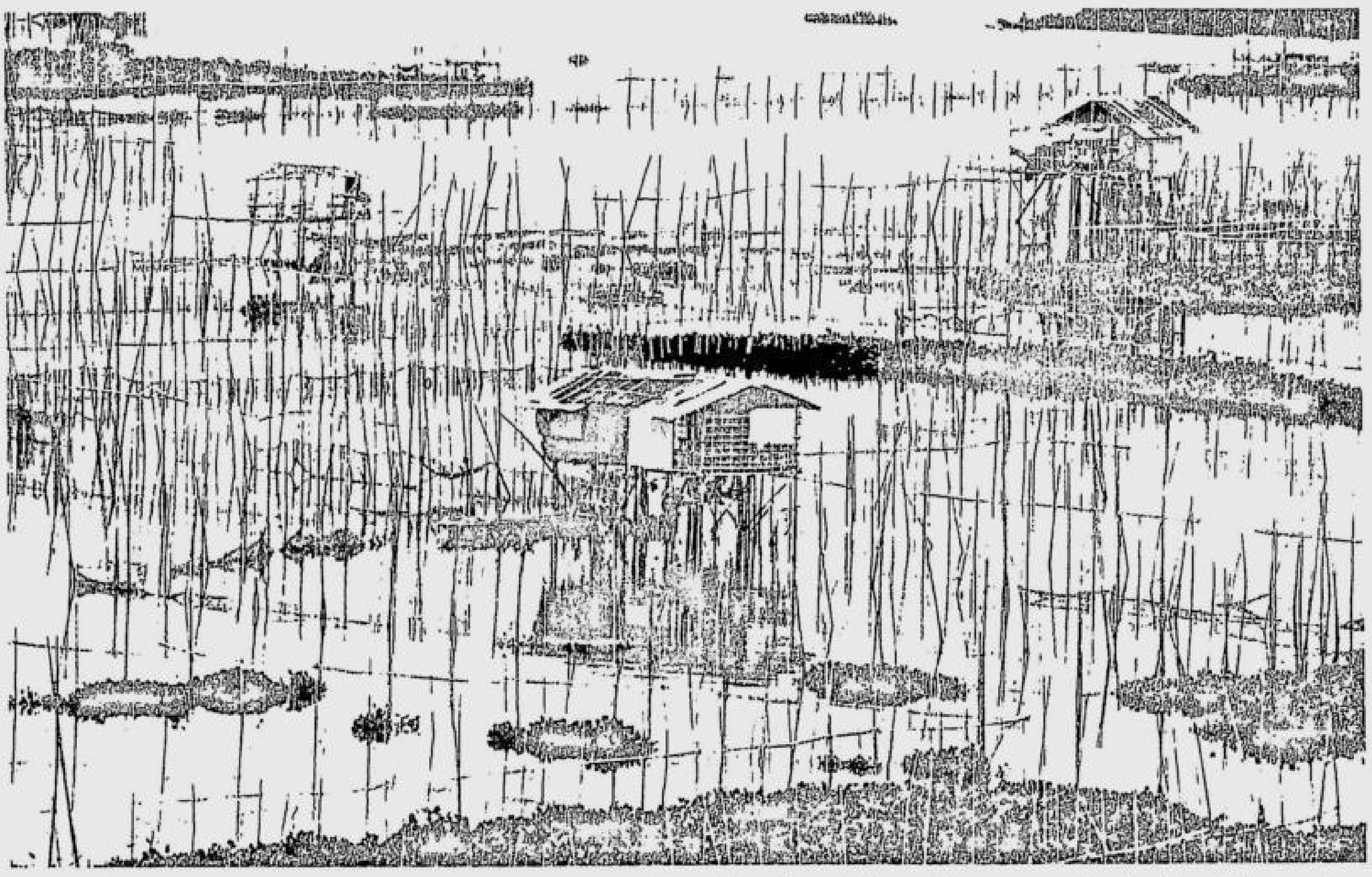
The fishermen, whose boat yielded dynamited fish and live reef fish, were arrested on Oct. 24 off Mangsee Island in Balabac, 273 kilometers south of here.

Authorities disclosed that Gonzalez ordered Prosecutor Allen Ross Rodriguez to withdraw the filing of the two cases.

Rodriguez said that as a way of "abiding with the secretary's directive," he filed a motion to "withdraw criminal information" at the Regional Trial Court Branch 52 under Judge Toribio Ilao.

The judge released 30 Chinese poachers caught at the Tubbataha Reef in December.

The motion to drop the charges will be heard on Feb. 2. Arraignment for the poaching case was set for Jan. 26 but the Chinese moved for its postponement pending their appealed to the DOJ.



THE EXPANSION of fish cages is one manifestation of the growing demand for fish and other marine resources that has driven fishermen to venture beyond municipal waters only to face stiff competition from foreign fishing vessels. ERNIE SARMIENTO

With the DOJ resolution, the prosecutors expressed concern that the Chinese, their boat and fishing paraphernalia would be released anytime.

"I have yet to receive the resolution, but I have already alerted the legal department which is preparing a legal pleading," said Paciano Gianan, chief of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in Palawan.

Lawyer Grizelda-Mayo Anda of the Environmental Legal Assistance Center (Elac) expressed readiness to extend legal assistance to the BFAR.

"We are contemplating on seeking a temporary restraining order to stop the release of the vessel and its crew," said Mayo-Anda.

Earlier reports identified the apprehended vessel as Kwok Tai May which was registered in Hong Kong.

Some of the poachers are out on bail while the rest are in the provincial jail.

Three cases have been filed by the BFAR-Palawan and the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS) for violations of the Fisheries Code—Section 87, poaching; Section 88, use of explosives and noxious substances; and Section 97, collection of endangered species.

The Chinese filed a motion for reinvestigation but this was denied. They again filed a motion for reconsideration and wewre denied anew by the prosecutor.

The Chinese's lawyer tried all legal remedies to delay the proceeding before filing the appeal to Gonzalez who decided in their favor, according to Mayo-Anda.

The captain, Kwok Wai Ming, earlier accused the BFAR-Palawan, the boat custodian, of theft of fishing paraphernalia.

BFAR officials denied the accusation, saying it was a strategy to divert attention away from the case.

Local authorities and NGOs expressed apprehension that this legal ploy would be used by the 30 Chinese caught intruding in the Tubbataha Reef on Dec. 21.

The 30 Chinese poachers posted another P1.7 million bond for collecting endangered species and importing fish species without permits.

Earlier, the leftist fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) made public a letter of Chinese Ambassador Li Jinjun pressing Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap to intercede for the release of the Chinese poachers.

Sen. Pia Cayetano, chair of the environment committee, sought tougher laws against illegal fishing in Tubbataha. *Robert Bagalay and Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Farmers storm DAR meeting at Davao hotel

DAVAO CITY—SOME 500 FARMERS from different parts of Mindanao and Negros Occidental stormed a gathering of top officials of the Department of Agrarian Reform in a posh hotel here Wednesday to express disgust over the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

The farmers demanded the immediate installation on lands awarded to them by the DAR through CARP.

The protesters were confronted by soldiers and security guards at the entry of Waterfront Hotel where DAR officials were listing their accomplishments.

Some soldiers fired warning shots. The demonstrators said a certain Sgt. Conrado Nequias poked his gun at the protesters.

Tension eased when Narciso Nieto, agrarian reform undersecretary, and other DAR officials went out to talk to the farmers.

The farmers, however, were demanding to see Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman. He didn't come out to meet them.

"We are faced with legal and technical problems that's why we find the implementation (of CARP) difficult," said Nieto. "I understand the impatience of the farmers."

Lani Factor, Task Force Mapalad spokesperson, said DAR was completely inutile, failing to install farmers on awarded land and distribute new land covered by CARP.

"What kind of accomplishments can they boast of?" said Factor.

Farmers in Mati, Davao Oriental, said a 244-hectare property there was covered by the CARP but the landowner filed a case that was still pending at the DAR-Southern Mindanao.

Constantino Sales, who spoke on behalf of farmers from Bukidnon, also said the DAR slept on their demand for the pieces of property of the Guingona, Valero and Sebastian clans in Malaybalay.

The 219-ha Luis Guingona Farm, owned by the brother of former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, has been under the program since 1995. The process is not moving because of the Guingonas' petition for exemption.

"If the DAR continues to be indecisive and weak over these matters, the situation could lead to unrest," Sales said.

Farmers from La Castellana, Negros Occidental, also asked Pangandaman to fulfill a promise to install them on a 144-ha piece of property that was awarded them through the CARP. The land is owned by Roberto Cuenca. *Jeffrey Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao*

Remote Samar town mayor murdered

By Vicente S. Labro
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE MUNICIPAL mayor of the island-town of Daram, Samar was fatally shot early Thursday while he was attending a village dance.

Police, however, could not say if the killing of Daram Mayor Benito B. Astorga was election-related or due to a personal grudge as the investigation was still going on.

Astorga, 47, a member of the Liberal Party (LP), was brought to this city but was declared dead on arrival at a hospital, according to a report that Chief Supt. Eliseo dela Paz, police director for Eastern Visayas, submitted to PNP Chief Oscar Calderon yesterday.

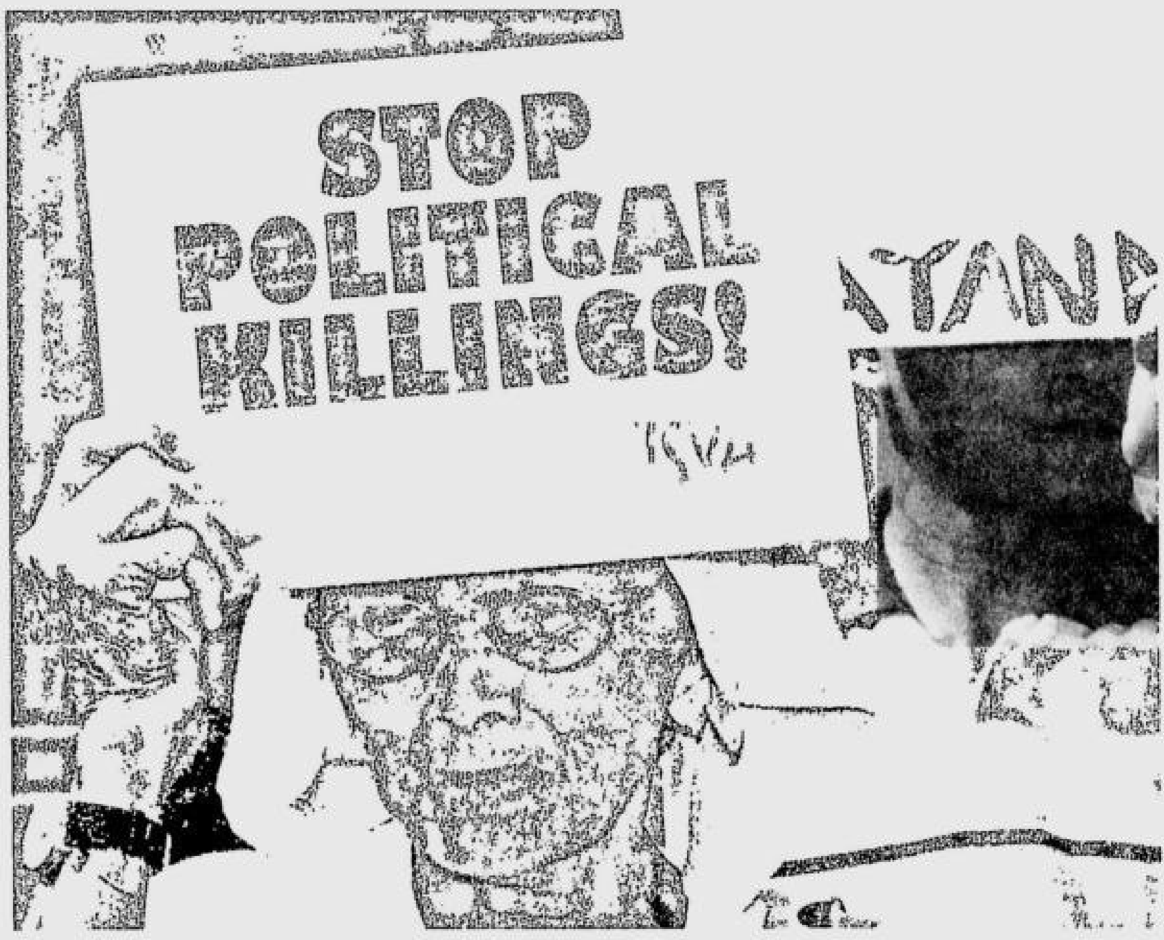
Samar Gov. Raul Daza, who heads the LP in the province, could not be reached for comment yesterday.

The killing occurred at around 2 a.m. on Jan. 25 in Barangay Birawan, an islet of Daram town, while the mayor was in a benefit dance as part of a fiesta celebration.

Astorga suffered five bullet wounds in the body. The gunman mixed with the crowd and disappeared.

Police said a .45 cal. pistol was used.

Senior Supt. Asdali Abah, Samar police chief, went to Daram yesterday to supervise the investigation, according to Dela Paz.



THE KILLINGS won't stop and neither would protest rallies condemning them. Protesters gather at the gates of the Philippine National Police in Camp Aguinaldo. RAFFY LERMA

Astorga, a civil engineer by profession, left behind his wife Lucia and four children, the eldest of whom is in fourth year high school while the youngest is in Grade 4.

Astorga is on his second term as mayor. His wife was mayor in 1998.

His father, Dioscoro Sr., was mayor during the Marcos dictatorship.

In 1986, his younger brother, Dioscoro Jr., then the town police chief, was gunned down in a village there. The case has remained unsolved.

The slain mayor's wife refused to talk to reporters. A sister and some relatives, however, said they had no idea why anyone would want him killed.

Elena A. Quimbo, an elder sister of the victim who now lives in the capital town of Catbalogan, said her brother worked hard to have electric lights and a potable water system installed in the remote town.

Farmer slain, 4 hurt in land reform clash

BACOLOD CITY—A farmer was killed yesterday and four others were injured Wednesday as conflict escalated between tillers and security forces at a land reform area in La Castellana, Negros Occidental, 67 kilometers south of here.

Pepito Santillan, 60, was killed when armed men shot at farmers' homes at 2 a.m. Thursday in Hacienda Velez-Malaga, according to Lani Factor of the Task Force Mapalad (TFM), an organization of militant farmers.

On Wednesday, four persons were wounded in a gun battle inside the disputed hacienda between rival farmer groups, the TFM said.

18 years of Agrarian Reform
AKBAYAN Peasant

THE DEMAND for land continues as the government grapples with lack of funds, feud between farmers' groups, landowner resistance, and an inefficient bureaucracy in implementing a land reform program that its critics said was doomed to fail from the start. AP

The slain farmer and two of the wounded were members of the TFM. The two other wounded were the head of the security force and a farm hand identified with landowner Roberto Cuenca.

For more than a decade, Cuenca has been resisting the inclusion of his family's 446-ha sugar estate in the land reform program.

The wounded were identified as Enrique Maliksi, chief security officer of the hacienda; farm worker Renato Mata; and TFM members Fernando Santilla, 41, and Rey Cortejo, 34.

The Department of Agrarian Reform has awarded to farmers 144 ha of the property in 2002, a decision upheld by the Supreme Court in September 2004. The farmers, however, were unable to occupy the land.

TFM spokesperson Edna Sobrecanay blamed Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman for what she called his indecisiveness and failure to fulfill his promise to install the land reform beneficiaries who already hold Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOAs).

Senior Insp. Placido Composa, La Castellana police chief, yesterday said the rival groups accused each other of starting the gun battle.

Maliksi and Mata, who are associated with the landowner, were being treated for bullet wounds at the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital in Bacolod. Cortejo was hit in the left hand while Santilla was wounded below the chin.

Composa said the clash erupted after TFM members occupied a portion of the hacienda awarded to them by the DAR.

Sobrecanay claimed the shooting started as security guards, backed by a squad of police-supervised Civilian Volunteer Organization men, tried to break up the ranks of some 100 farmers who tried to occupy a portion of the land already awarded to them in 2002.

Those involved in the battle have gone into hiding after policemen and soldiers of the 11th Infantry Battalion arrived, he said.

Troopers of the 603rd Provincial Mobile Group have been tasked by Senior Supt. Rosendo Franco, provincial police director, with securing the hacienda. *Carla P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

US official mobbed by Muslim kids in Sulu

From page A1

Bush is expected to make a phone call to President Macapagal-Arroyo to personally thank her for her administration's efforts in holding terrorism at bay in the Philippines, thus keeping America safe from terrorists as well.

"It only manifests the elation and satisfaction of the President of the United States with the developments here in the Philippines," said Ermita of the call Bush was expected to make after Ms Arroyo arrived in Davos, Switzerland, for a three-day visit. *(See story on this page.)*

Hughes, who arrived in the Philippines on Wednesday morning and was due to leave today, met with Ms Arroyo on Wednesday night in Malacañang and congratulated her on the "very successful" counterterrorism campaign that resulted in the killing of two top leaders of the extremist Abu Sayyaf terror group.

'Enormously grateful'

"President Bush is enormously grateful to the Armed Forces of the Philippines and President Arroyo and the people of the Philippines for [their] bravery and professionalism and the success that they have had [in] protecting us all, protecting not only the [Filipino] people but also the American people from the evil and the threat that we face from terror," Hughes told reporters Wednesday night.

BUSH CONFIDANTE IN MALACAÑANG: Karen Hughes, undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, and a longtime aide to US President George W. Bush, pays a courtesy call on President Arroyo on Wednesday evening. With Hughes is US Ambassador Kristie Kenney. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Hughes flew yesterday to Jolo, Sulu, with US Ambassador Kristie Kenney, who apparently wanted to "showcase" the US government's development efforts there, Ermita said.

He said he would not be surprised if Hughes were also to visit Maguindanao, where the US government is also engaged in development projects.

The official privy to Hughes' itinerary said sending Washington VIPs to Mindanao must be the Bush administration's way of trying to see up close what made Uncle Sam relatively "welcome" in the Philippines' predominantly Muslim South.

According to the official, "a train of US officials" has been making high-profile visits to Mindanao since last year.

Among the American VIPs who visited the region last year were Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Erick John, Assistant Secretaries of State Christopher Hill and John Hillen, and Hawaii Sen. Daniel Inouye.

"We are not engaged in combat operations," Agence France Presse quoted Hughes as telling reporters in Maimbung, Sulu.

She said the Philippine and US governments were "cooperating together to try to weed out the forces that threaten violence and threaten to terrorize."

"We want to partner with the people of the Philippines in a way that would help them stop the terrorists from threatening peace and stability," she said.

Diplomacy of peace

Hughes described the US involvement in the Philippines as a "diplomacy of peace."

"The things that we are doing are concrete ways to help people have better lives," she said after inspecting school buildings and seeing the computers provided by the US government.

A team of US military advisers has been operating in Jolo since last year, when the Armed Forces of the Philippines launched an offensive to flush out key Jemaah Islamiyah leaders sheltering with the Abu Sayyaf.

The Indonesia-based JI is a regional terrorist group with links to the international terror organization of Osama bin Laden.

Special guests

After the dinner at Malacañang, Hughes and US Embassy officials led by Kenney were Ms Arroyo's special guests at an awarding ceremony for Filipino military officers and men involved in the successful counterterrorism efforts in Mindanao.

Hughes thanked the soldiers for a job well done, saying, "They were the ones in the front lines, risking their lives to help keep all of us safe."

The President and the visiting American official talked about the recent military successes against the Abu Sayyaf, as well as the "value" of the RP-US Balikatan war games, which, according to Ermita, had helped in "enhancing the operational capability" of the AFP.

Ermita said Ms Arroyo also told Hughes that as President and concurrent defense secretary, she had released P10 billion to hasten the implementation of the AFP modernization program.

He said this was "a come-on" for the Americans to "deliver fast enough" Philippine acquisitions such as helicopters and communication equipment.

Slain Abu Sayyaf leader lived among flowers in 'paradise'

From page A1

of the 8th Special Forces Company that killed Sulaiman, was amazed at Sulaiman's dwellings on Mount Dajo in Talipao, Sulu.

Mijares, 30, said his men found 17 bunkers believed to be used by VIPs, like Sulaiman and other Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah commanders.

Flowers and perfumes

Each hut had two beds, chairs and a makeshift bathroom for women decked with flowers and stocked with bottles of perfume.

Some 200 meters away, the troops found 27 smaller bunkers believed to be used by the Abu Sayyaf fighters.

The encampment had a cellular phone signal, which is rare on Jolo island, and natural water sources.

"There were flowers leading to the bunkers and around the bunkers. It was like paradise," Mijares said.

Lt. Col. Monico Batle, head of the 3rd Special Forces Battalion, said that based on the growth of flowering plants the camp was probably set up two to three months ago.

"It was a well-developed camp," said Batle, citing the fortifications and the water sources.

He said that after receiving intelligence information that Sulaiman was in the vicinity, he deployed 60 men from the 8th Special Forces Company led by Mijares to scout the area.

VIP bunkers

The soldiers moved during the night to get to the foot of Mount Dajo.

At the break of dawn on Jan. 16, the soldiers scaled the steep mountainside to slip past the Abu Sayyaf camp's "forward security" made up of the 27 bunkers, to position themselves behind the 17 main "VIP" bunkers.

"They took the longer and harder route to get there," said Special Forces Regiment commander Brig. Gen. Arturo Ortiz. "You would think no one lives in that mountain," he added.

Mijares said he and his men heard sounds from the area, including women's voices. Scouts reported seeing people moving about as well as clothes, including camouflage jackets, hung around.

Sulaiman was killed as he got close to one of the soldiers in hiding, said Cpl. Raul Suacillo, the lead scout.

Suacillo said he was four to six meters away from Sulaiman, who was wearing a sando, pajamas and combat boots, when the Abu Sayyaf leader went to relieve himself in the bush.

GOOD JOB, SARGE. Ms Arroyo says as much during awarding rites as he congratulates Cpl. Raul Suacillo of the Army Special Forces, who is credited for killing Sulaiman. He was promoted 2 ranks to staff seargent. LYN RILLON

The fog and thick vegetation provided the soldiers good cover, and Sulaiman realized too late that Suacillo's M-14 rifle was aimed at him.

"We looked at each other. I told him, 'Come with me, be quiet *(Halika, huwag ka maingay)*.'" Instead of stepping forward, Sulaiman ran away and shouted "Allahu Akbar (God is Great)," recalled Suacillo, who did not recognize Sulaiman at the time.

He said Sulaiman yelled to warn his two aides who stood some 15 meters away.

Suacillo, 32, opened fire and hit Sulaiman in the shoulder from the back. Sulaiman tumbled into a ravine, and Mijares signaled his men to open fire.

The gun battle lasted from 9:20 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., according to Mijares.

But when the soldiers had finally overrun the camp, none of the rebels were left behind except Sulaiman's body that his aides failed to retrieve from the ravine, according to the military. Two soldiers were slightly wounded by M203 grenade shrapnel.

Mijares said his men took pictures of the body before they buried it in the encounter site, as they were instructed by their superiors.

$5-million reward

Upon their return to their base, the soldiers showed the pictures to intelligence operatives who recognized the wanted Abu Sayyaf leader who carried a $5-million reward on his head.

The soldiers later returned to exhume the remains and bring them back to their base, and military officials announced on Jan. 17 that they had "neutralized" Sulaiman.

Suacillo showed reporters the Olympus digital camera which he said was used to take the slain Abu Sayyaf's remains. But he said his men had erased the pictures from the camera's memory card.

Ortiz said there were unconfirmed reports that Jemaah Islamiyah bomb expert Dulmatin, who has a $10-million price on his head, and Abu Sayyaf commander Al Bader Parad were injured in the encounter. *(Story at left.)*

On Jan. 20, the military also announced that a US Federal Bureau of Investigation DNA test confirmed that remains dug up in Patikul, Sulu, last Dec. 27 belonged to Janjalani.

Janjalani was killed in a Sept. 4 encounter in Patikul between 27 troops from the Marine Force Reconnaissance Platoon led by 2nd Lt. Romulo Dimayuga and about 200 rebels. Six Marines were killed and 16 wounded, while 67 rebels, including Janjalani, were killed.

Part of the job

Asked if he thought himself as a hero, Suacillo, who has been promoted two ranks to staff sergeant, replied: "That is normal for us. That is how our job is."

Sen. Richard Gordon yesterday introduced a resolution in the Senate commending the soldiers for taking a "substantial step toward the weakening of terrorism in the country." *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Cynthia D. Balana*

Indonesian 'bomber' wounded, says AFP

AN INDONESIAN BOMB-MAKER wanted for the 2002 Bali attacks was wounded last week in a clash with Philippine troops, the military said yesterday.

Dulmatin, a member of the radical Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) network and one of Asia's most wanted militants, was traveling with Abu Sayyaf bandits when he was caught in a firefight on Jolo, Lt. Almerante Mijares said.

"Based on (radio) signal intercepts and human intelligence, Dulmatin and his comrades were wounded," said the Army officer, who led the military assault near the town of Talipao.

It was the same clash in which top Abu Sayyaf commander Abu Sulaiman was killed, the military said.

The Abu Sayyaf and the JI, which are believed to have been working together to plot attacks in recent months, are both on the US government's list of foreign terrorist organizations.

Dulmatin and another JI bomb-maker, Umar Patek, slipped into the southern Philippines and established links with the Abu Sayyaf sometime in 2005 to evade an Indonesian dragnet, intelligence officials said.

The US government has offered up to $11 million for the capture of Dulmatin and Patek.

Both terrorists allegedly played key roles in bombing nightclubs on the Indonesian resort island of Bali in 2002, killing more than 200 people. *AFP*

Virgin Komodo now pa and ma to 5 dragons, stuns scientists

From page A1

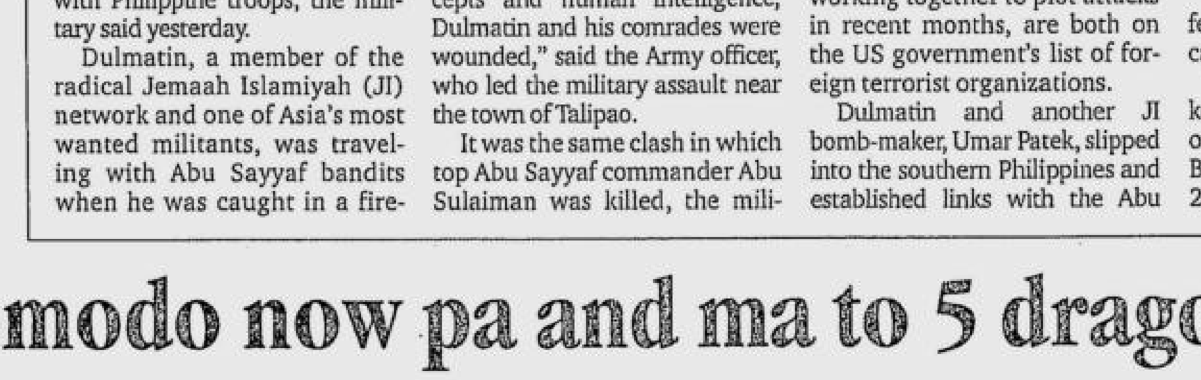
northwest England in May last year when Flora laid fertilized eggs—although a male dragon had never been near her. DNA tests on the eggs which collapsed proved that Flora was both the "mother" and "father" of the embryos.

Scientists showed reporters five wriggling black and yellow Komodo dragons that were the product of virgin birth. They predicted the five male dragons—hatched on Jan. 15, 17, 18, 21 and 22—offered hope for breeding the endangered species.

The shells began cracking last week after an eight-month gestation period, which culminated with the arrival of the fifth dragon on Tuesday. Two eggs remain in incubation and are expected to hatch soon.

"Flora is oblivious to the excitement she has caused, but we are delighted to say she is now a mom and dad," said Kevin Buley, curator of lower vertebrates and invertebrates at Chester Zoo.

"When the first of the babies hatched, we didn't know whether to make her a cup of tea or pass her the cigars," Buley joked.



WORLD'S LARGEST LIZARD species, the Komodo Flora (above), at the Chester Zoo in Chester, England, is the subject of a ground-breaking scientific paper. (At left), one of the five Komodo hatched by Flora.

"It is a huge relief and a huge excitement—when the first one slit its egg, our head of reptiles screamed. Even though they are only a few days old, our baby dragons are doing very well and receiving the expert care they need at this time."

Self-fertilization

About 70 reptile species, including snakes and lizards, can reproduce asexually. Self-fertilization in this way is called parthenogenesis. Through the process, the species makes a copy of its own genetic code. All baby lizards conceived this way are male.

Flora's virginal conception and that of another Komodo dragon at the London Zoo were the first such cases documented involving the Komodo dragon. The two conceptions were announced last September in the journal Nature.

"The implications for conservation breeding programs are enormous because this opens up a new way that animals can potentially colonize an island," Buley said.

"A female could swim to a new island, lay a clutch of eggs, then mate with sons and be sexually producing normally within a generation."

Ravenous appetite

Flora's five hatchlings are between 40 and 45 centimeters (16 inches to nearly 18 inches) long and weigh between 100 and 125 grams (3.5 and 4.4 ounces), Buley said.

The hatchlings are enjoying a diet of crickets and locusts. When fully grown to 3 meters (10 feet) long and weighing about 140 kilograms (300 pounds), they'll be capable of eating a whole pig or deer at one sitting, hooves and all.

That ravenous appetite explains why Flora is not allowed anywhere near her offspring.

"No maternal instincts exist in Komodo dragons so it is perfectly natural to keep them as far apart as possible," Buley said. "She would try to eat anything that comes in front of her."

The five hatchlings, scheduled to be moved into a public display enclosure in April, have yet to be named.

"As Komodo dragons can live for over 40 years, we want to get the names just right," Buley said. *Reports from AP, AFP and Reuters*

IN THE KNOW

Komodo number only 5,000

THE KOMODO DRAGON (SCIENtific name: *Varanus komodoensis*) is the world's largest lizard. Its tail is longer than its body, and its feet have strong, sharp claws.

Komodo dragons, normally sandy brown with dark markings, are endangered creatures, numbering only about 5,000. First discovered in 1910, the dragons are usually found in open lowland areas on the Indonesian islands of Komodo, Rintja, Padar and Flores.

Eats humans

These lizards are solitary animals that get together only to breed and to feed on prey. They are carnivorous and cannibalistic.

Using swimming and climbing skills, good eyesight, a keen sense of smell (that can track dead animals up to 8 kilometers away) and speed, a Komodo dragon can down larger animals, like deer and wild boar. It also eats humans. Its serrated teeth (numbering about 60) and highly flexible skull allows it to swallow large chunks of food.

Even if a bitten prey escapes from the lizard's clutches, it will die of blood poisoning within one to two days because of bacteria in the Komodo dragon's mouth.

Young komodo dragons live on trees and feed on insects. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

Erap camp hits Ang for hiding plea deal

From page A1

tobacco excise taxes originally allocated for Ilocos Sur.

Saguisag said Ang's plea bargain contained information prejudicial to the defense of his client Estrada, who along with Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and lawyer Edward Serapio, went on trial at the Sandiganbayan for plunder.

Estrada, who is detained in his estate in Tanay, Rizal, had been on trial since he was ousted in 2001. He is facing plunder charges for allegedly amassing some P4 billion in ill-gotten wealth.

Joint trial

"Technically, it's still a joint trial. As far as I know, there has been no severance of trial," Saguisag said of the deal being potentially against Estrada in the plunder case. Ang was an original accused in the case.

Saguisag's reading of the possible impact of Ang's plea bargain on his client's case was in sharp contrast with that of Estrada and his spokesperson.

Saguisag criticized government prosecutors and Ang's lawyers for their aversion to giving Estrada lawyer Jay Flaminiano a copy of the deal even after it was presented to the justices of the Sandiganbayan special division during the pre-trail proceedings against Ang on Wednesday.

"They didn't want to give a copy of the agreement. How would you look at that?" Saguisag said.

Battle for hearts and minds

Saguisag said the case "is not only a battle for hearts and minds but of one's place in history among those supposed to be involved in the crimes alleged."

The defense lawyer filed a motion with the Sandiganbayan seeking clarification on whether or not information prejudicial to the former President may be received by the court without him, the principal accused, being informed about it.

Saguisag also noted that the joint trial of Estrada and Ang had not been severed.

The lawyer asked the court to give the defense panel more time to file its reply to the prosecution's opposition to the defense's formal offer of evidence in light of "the confusion that may have arisen" because of the plea bargain deal.

"On the basis of media reports, we need to know whether Ang has filed a motion for a separate trial. If not, we should be notified of all hearings, particularly if (Estrada's) rights may be adversely affected," Saguisag said in his seven-page motion.

"This is due process in what is punishable by death prior to the amendment. Notice is indispensable. Then we decide whether to waive our right to be present or not," he added.

Estrada said he was confident of the evidence that his lawyers had submitted in his defense. "The deal will not affect us," he said after Ang, his former gambling buddy, submitted the agreement to the Sandiganbayan.

Hearsay

Rufus Rodriguez, Estrada's spokesperson, said the plea bargain "will not prejudice" the case against the deposed President.

"[The contents of the plea bargain deal are] hearsay as far as the defense is concerned. [The deal] will not affect our client's case," Rodriguez said on Wednesday.

Rodriguez said Ang's latest allegations against Estrada would run counter to the court's reenactment of the cash delivery that he said showed that it was physically impossible for one man to carry with him P130 million in cash.

Rodriguez also said that Ang had already told a Senate inquiry under oath that the alleged diversion of the excise tax proceeds, as alleged by top Estrada accuser Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson, was a lie.

At the Senate impeachment trial of Estrada in 2000 and at his plunder trial at the Sandiganbayan, Singson had said that it was Ang who had delivered the money to Estrada.

No more trial for Ang

Dennis Villa-Ignacio, lead prosecutor in the plunder case, said Wednesday that the plea bargain deal, once accepted by the Sandiganbayan, would form part of the records of the case.

He said there was no longer a need for Ang to take the witness stand to testify on how he delivered P130 million in cash to Estrada's residence on Polk Street in North Greenhills, San Juan.

"Why would we go through another trial for Atong Ang? That's already it," Villa-Ignacio said of the uselessness of having Ang take the stand against Estrada in view of the plea bargaining agreement.

Unless Ang takes the stand and testifies on the alleged delivery of the money to Estrada's home, the damaging information may not be used against Estrada as this will constitute hearsay, said Villa-Ignacio and Ang's lawyer, Ruth Castelo.

"The plea agreement is just between the prosecution and our client Atong Ang. It will not affect the case against President Estrada," Castelo said.

Saguisag said the special prosecutor was saying one thing while Ang's lawyers were saying another. "This is the reason why we are seeking a clarification from the court," he said.

Like Superman

In his manifestation before the court, Saguisag sought to clarify if Ang's allegations would be subjected to closer examination by the court.

"Is this honorable court ready to pepper Ang with questions on the ludicrous tale that like Superman he carried P130 million all by his lonesome? Or that in fact he never went to Polk during President Estrada's entire tenure? No court could just take any imposition," Saguisag said.

Concern for Ang's safety

He expressed concern for Ang's safety following his plea bargain deal with the government prosecutors.

Saguisag said that it was in Estrada's interest that his coaccused remain alive for the day when it would be safe for him to tell the "real (story)."

"We have a stake in his safety after what he has done. We want him to live. In the wisdom of a new day, he may tell another story, this time, the real one," Saguisag said.

It will hurt Erap reputation more than his case, says Palace

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG BELIEVES THAT CHARlie "Atong" Ang's admission of taking kickbacks would hurt deposed President Joseph Estrada's reputation rather than his plunder case at the Sandiganbayan.

"If I were Estrada, there is nothing to fear from Ang's statement because his (Estrada) case is finished. I just don't know what will be its effect on the public perception because we can't really say what the people will feel," Presidential Chief Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol told reporters yesterday.

Apostol, one of the House prosecutors during Estrada's impeachment trial, said the Palace did not have a hand in Ang's plea bargain offer.

"We have nothing to do with that (Ang's admission). There was no communication, it was his own strategy (*diskarte*)," he said.

Significant role

In an interview with reporters following President Macapagal-Arroyo's departure for Switzerland, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita denied talk that Malacañang had a hand in Ang's admission.

Ermita said that only the prosecution lawyers had any contact with Ang because they felt that Ang could play a "very significant role" in the plunder case.

"It's the usual court procedure. If you were the prosecution lawyers, you would get people who would help in your case. I think that is what happened here," he said.

Ermita refused to comment on whether Ang's admission would hurt Estrada's chances of being acquitted of the plunder charge against him.

Ang's plea bargain was an administration ploy to demolish Estrada's credibility to lead the opposition coalition, according to opposition lawmakers.

Demolishing Erap popularity

Rep. Juan Edgardo "Sonny" Angara said Ang's admission that he and his former gambling buddy pocketed P130 million in tobacco excise taxes in 1998 had put in serious doubt Estrada's capacity to unify a fractious opposition.

"President Erap (Estrada) remains the de facto head of the opposition because of his still immense popularity," said Angara.

He said the administration would want to "demolish" Estrada's role in unifying administration critics to ensure victory in the midterm elections.

Leviste lawyers protest new probe as 'injustice'

From page A1

a reinvestigation and not the private complainants, they said.

Leviste's lawyers also questioned the impartiality of the public prosecutors assigned to conduct the review, citing a statement of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez of "evident premeditation" in the incident.

The assigned fiscal, Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, denied this in open court on Thursday and said Gonzalez "is not my conscience" as "I have my own mind."

The defense lawyers called on Alameda to stop the DOJ from superseding the court. They said Velasco had already begun the reinvestigation even before the court order granting the complainant's request for a reinvestigation.

They said Velasco has already subpoenaed concerned parties, asking them to appear at a hearing at the justice department on Jan. 31.

No eyewitness

"Neither the Secretary of Justice, the State Prosecutor, nor the Fiscal may interfere with the judge's disposition of the case, much less impose upon the court their opinion regarding the guilt or innocence of the accused, for the court is the sole judge of that," the lawyers said.

The lawyers also scoffed at the suggestion that the shooting was premeditated, saying there was no eyewitness to the incident.

Witnesses invited to give statements included employees at the Leviste-owned building, the LPL, who heard the raised voices of Leviste and De las Alas moments before the shooting.

"It can no way be established from mere suppositions that the killing was perpetrated by treachery. In the case at bar, where the manner of attack could not be proven, accused, therefore, should be given the benefit of the doubt," the lawyers said in their motion.

Citing jurisprudence involving similar circumstances, the defense also offered its rebuttal to the private complainant's interpretation of De las Alas' gunshot wound at the back of the head as evidence of murder.

"There are other gunshot wounds in the frontal area. And to theorize that the gunshot wound at the back was the first shot is not only physically impossible but also highly improbable. This is because if it were so, the tendency of the victim was to fall flat on the ground. Hence, it is impossible for him to sustain the other gunshot wounds in front," the lawyers said. *Tarra Quismundo*

Iloilo attack 'excessive' but cops to get awards

From page A1

cording to their ground commander, it was a "judgment call" for which they should be commended.

Testifying yesterday at a Senate inquiry into the Jan. 17 assault, Chief Supt. Wilfredo Dulay defended his men and said the operation aimed at serving a dismissal order on Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas had been prompted by instructions to "restore order" at the capitol and by reports that armed men were massing inside.

But Dulay, the police director of Western Visayas, admitted that the assault team had failed to arrest anyone or seize any firearm.

Nevertheless, he said he had recommended awards for members of the team.

Washing his hands

Speaking with reporters after the hearing, Sen. Franklin Drilon, chair of the public order committee, said the assault team that included policemen from the Regional Mobile Group had used "excessive force."

Drilon accused Dulay of "washing his hands" of his men's behavior and consequent "liabilities," and lamented that he was even rewarding them for violent actions: "It's sad that even those who pointed their guns at civilians will get awards."

At the same inquiry conducted by the Senate committees on public order and on local government, Tupas said he received by mail the official copy of the Ombudsman's dismissal order only on Jan. 24. His son and namesake, a provincial board member, said the assault team appeared ready to kill.

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and Director Evelyn Trompeta, and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez were no-shows for varying reasons.

But Gutierrez said her office would investigate the manner with which the Department of Interior and Local Government and the Philippine National Police implemented the dismissal order on Tupas.

Members of the assault team, dressed in full battle gear, were shown in photographs and TV footage smashing glass panels and aiming high-powered guns at Tupas family members and supporters.

Governor Tupas, accused of graft, had managed to secure a temporary restraining order from the Court of Appeals minutes after the storming of the capitol began.

The assault has elicited loud criticism from various sectors, including the Commission on Human Rights as well as lawmakers, mainly Tupas' party mates at the Liberal Party wing of Drilon, and triggered calls for investigation.

Really angry

Dulay said he became angry after seeing footage of the assault.

"We had the briefing, and we emphasized to the men that we [should] maintain our composure. We should not do this and do that. When I saw the footage, I was really angry," he said, recalling that he was particularly riled by the smashing of the glass wall panels.

However, Dulay said he later learned that the policeman shown breaking glass did it to prevent a stampede in case a shootout broke out.

"Whatever the lapses and excesses, I think that's a judgment call," he said, citing for instance that the policeman had a "purpose", in smashing the glass panels at the capitol's third floor.

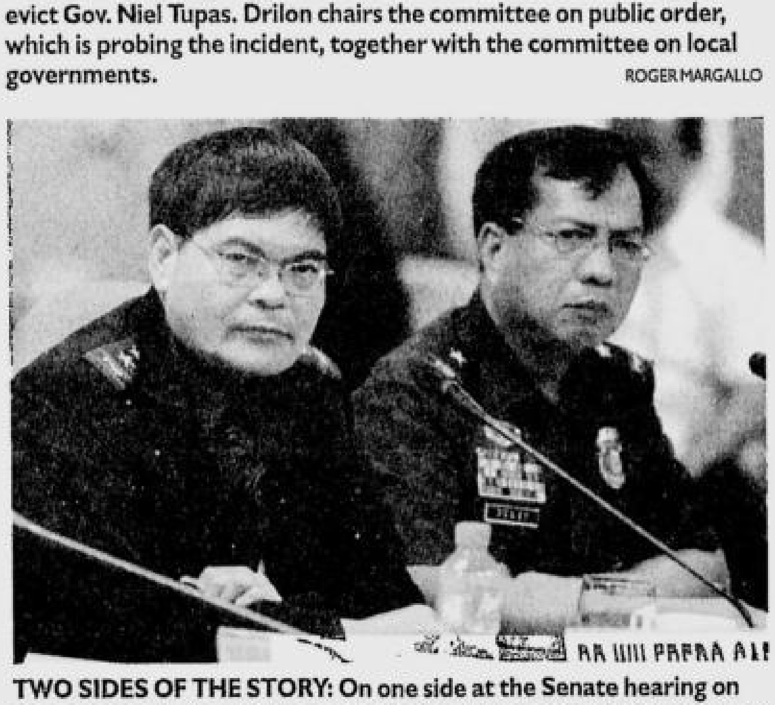
Dulay had earlier admitted that the training of guns on civilians and smashing of glass panels were not part of the assault order he had issued.

Commented Drilon after the hearing: "He was there present. He could have certainly taken a direct hand in preventing violence if he found it valid to stop this excessive use of force, to which he had admitted in a media interview."

Very happy

Dulay confirmed that in the Jan. 21 post-operations report he submitted to PNP Director General Oscar Calderon, he had recommended awards for the team "for successfully carrying out" orders.

GOOD READ: Sen. Frank Drilon refers to an INQUIRER item during the Senate hearing on police "excesses" in Iloilo in the attempt to evict Gov. Niel Tupas. Drilon chairs the committee on public order, which is probing the incident, together with the committee on local governments. ROGER MARGALLO



TWO SIDES OF THE STORY: On one side at the Senate hearing on the police assault on the Iloilo provincial capitol are PNP Director for Operations Wilfredo V. Garcia (left) and Western Visayas Police Director Chief Supt. Wilfredo Dulay. On the other side were the complainants led by Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. ROGER MARGALLO

"When I did that job, when no blood was shed, I was very happy. I was very happy that I was able to perform my orders without any bloodshed. I was very grateful," he said when Drilon pressed him on the awards.

But any award would depend on the results of the investigation of the Internal Affairs Service, Dulay said.

Besides, he added, investigation had shown that policemen pointed their firearms downward and not at Tupas' children and supporters.

Drilon, however, insisted that this was belied by the video footage.

Dulay related that his actions were prompted by a DILG memorandum to Calderon directing regional and police directors to restore normal operations in areas affected by the series of dismissal orders from the Ombudsman, and clear these of illegal assemblies and barricades.

He said that he presumed the memorandum to be regular, and that he did not see the need to verify if the PNP could enforce the dismissal of a government official even before the latter could appeal it.

'They attacked us'

Tupas, 74, maintained that the DILG order was illegal.

"For the record, I received the official copy of the Ombudsman decision only [on] Jan. 24, by registered mail. More importantly, the Ombudsman has no power to dismiss local elected officials," he said at the start of the hearing.

Tupas Jr., who in TV footage was seen being dragged and pushed to the floor by the assault team, said: "They attacked us. We tried to push, to hold our ground, but we were no match against the antiriot [police]. They smashed the three glass panels; they were pointing guns toward civilians."

He said that during the melee, a policeman even cursed and threatened to shoot him.

"In their eyes, I could see that they were ready to kill," he added.

At a press conference yesterday in Camp Crame, Director Edgardo Doromal, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), admitted that the assault team should not have pointed guns at civilians.

But Doromal said this was "necessary" to quell Tupas' supporters.

"We admit that some [policemen] pointed their guns. But it was a necessary reaction because the civilians were told to sit but had attempted to stand up. That is part of our training. This is used to caution someone who does not follow police orders," he said.

No violation of procedures

Doromal had earlier been sent to Iloilo to investigate police actions during the assault.

The other day, he said that based on the findings of the "very impartial" investigation, there was no "overkill" on the part of the police and "no violation of police procedures."

Doromal yesterday said that if he were the ground commander, he would admonish them for being "lax" toward Tupas' supporters. He showed reporters footage from local TV showing policemen talking to the governor's supporters.

"That is our observation. They did not contain the area properly," he said.

Doromal also said the police force was "not enough to clear the area."

He said the PNP had fielded 200 policemen against an estimated 1,000 supporters of Tupas "with the support of heavily armed men holed up in the building."

As a result of the investigation, Doromal said, he would recommend to PNP chief Calderon that members of the assault team undergo a "refresher course."

But for all that, the policemen should be "commended" for the way they handled the situation, Doromal said.

He said he had recommended no charges against members of the assault team.

Ombudsman probe

But in a letter to Drilon, Ombudsman Gutierrez said she had ordered the formation of a task force that would look into the assault, "to determine if any public officer should be answerable by law."

Gutierrez also said her office "had nothing to do with the implementation" of the dismissal order on Tupas. *With reports from Alcuin Papa and Norman Bordadora*

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Control over Montalban facility rages; MMDA steps in to resolve issue

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Tarra Quismundo

TEN MILLION PESOS WORTH OF PIPES AND other methane gas testing gadgets at the Montalban Solid Waste Disposal Facility in Rodriguez, Rizal were damaged yesterday when the Rizal provincial government leveled piles of garbage in the controversial sanitary landfill, the subject of a turf war between provincial and local government officials.

Heavy trucks were used to level the garbage at dawn yesterday. Provincial legal officer Edgardo Samson said the provincial board was just enforcing a resolution to rehabilitate the landfill after the provincial government assumed supervision of the facility three months ago.

Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuerpo, who refused to recognize the "takeover," is crying foul. "I will consult my lawyer on the appropriate legal action. I am puzzled about their agenda in destroying the pipes," Cuerpo told the INQUIRER.

Cuerpo authorized the testing project, entering into an agreement with private firm Marubeni and Karbon Kredit to explore the possibility of building a methane gas power plant on the 14-hectare landfill. The testing equipment were installed months ago. The provincial government, however, declared the agreement invalid. Samson said such agreements should have passed through the provincial board.

The provincial board tried to dismantle the pipes Tuesday but Cuerpo quickly had the landfill closed and barricaded. But following a dialog that evening with provincial officials presided over by Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, Cuerpo reopened the landfill, preventing a garbage crisis.

The landfill receives trash from 10 out of 17 towns and cities in Metro Manila. Cuerpo thought the dialog resolved the problem with the provincial government until the trucks came to level the garbage.

The mayor alleged that the people from the provincial government "were assisted by teams of the provincial police."

But provincial police director Senior Supt. Freddie Panen told the INQUIRER that his men were in the area "to secure it from the New People's Army who threatened to bomb the area."

Samson said the workers only meant to level off the landfill.

"It just so happened that the wells were there," he said, adding that the provincial board asked Cuerpo several times for a formal notice to the provincial government about the testing project, but the mayor allegedly ignored the letters.

"We are just asking for coordination. He (Cuerpo) should at least show some respect for the provincial government," Samson told the INQUIRER.

While it had no powers over quarreling local officials of Rizal, MMDA officials again met with provincial officials and Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuerpo last night to try to avert a potential garbage problem in Metro Manila.

MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno told the INQUIRER yesterday that Chair Bayani Fernando and other MMDA officials would meet the Rizal officials later at night to discuss their conflict at the dump, the largest disposal site for the Metro's trash.

"We have to make them realize that they cannot close the dump because doing so would affect Metro Manila. The solution is not to tell them what to do and what not to do but to look into the legality of what they are doing," Nacianceno said.

LANDFILLS FAIL

WHILE Rizal government officials are locked in a dispute over the Montalban dump, environmental activists and concerned citizens join the Eco Waste Coalition's campaign to stop the opening of landfills in the country at Miriam College in Quezon City yesterday. The group believes an ecology-based approach, and not landfills, is needed to help solve the growing garbage problem in the country. RAFFY LERMA

Court stops dismantling of Makati City billboard

By Tarra Quismundo

A MAKATI COURT STOPPED YESTERDAY the dismantling of an electronic billboard on a public park at the Guadalupe cloverleaf in Makati City.

Judge Zenaida Laguilles of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 143 issued the order pending the resolution of the injunction case filed by the billboard's owner against the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). The department considered the structure illegal and was set to dismantle it.

As part of its continuing crackdown on illegal and dangerous advertising signs, the DPWH had given the billboard's owner, Jemah Ads Inc., until today to take down its electronic display on the southbound side of Edsa on Guadalupe Bridge. The space was considered government property, making its construction illegal according to the DPWH.

But Laguilles said unresolved issues surrounding the city-approved installation of the electronic display "prompt this court to rule in favor of the issuance of writ of preliminary injunction."

"... [P]ending the conclusion of trial on the instant case, a writ of preliminary injunction is hereby issued prohibiting the defendants (DPWH) from dismantling plaintiff's subject billboard," the judge said in her two-page order.

The ad firm is asking the court to stop permanently the DPWH from demolishing the electronic display at the city-owned Guadalupe Park which was authorized by a City Council Resolution in February 2004.

City Hall defended the ad firm, citing the resolution that allowed the billboard's construction. The resolution authorized the local government to enter into an agreement with the private firm for the rental of space in the public park for advertisement.

Under the resolution, the city would have control over the commercial content flashed on the display's colored screen. City Hall was also given 216 15-second slots (a total of 54 minutes) during the billboard's 18-hour daily operation (6 a.m.-12 midnight) to make public service announcements and plug city government projects.

"We are puzzled why the electronic billboard is being singled out. It has withstood several typhoons and we believe that billboard is structurally sound. While it is along a national road, it is not on the road but on city property," said Makati information chief Joey Salgado.

Salgado added that the ad firm could take measures to address problems like blinding lights by nighttime, but dismantling should not be an option.

He said City Hall had plans to use the billboard as a "very viable source of information," including metro-wide traffic data to give motorists real-time updates.

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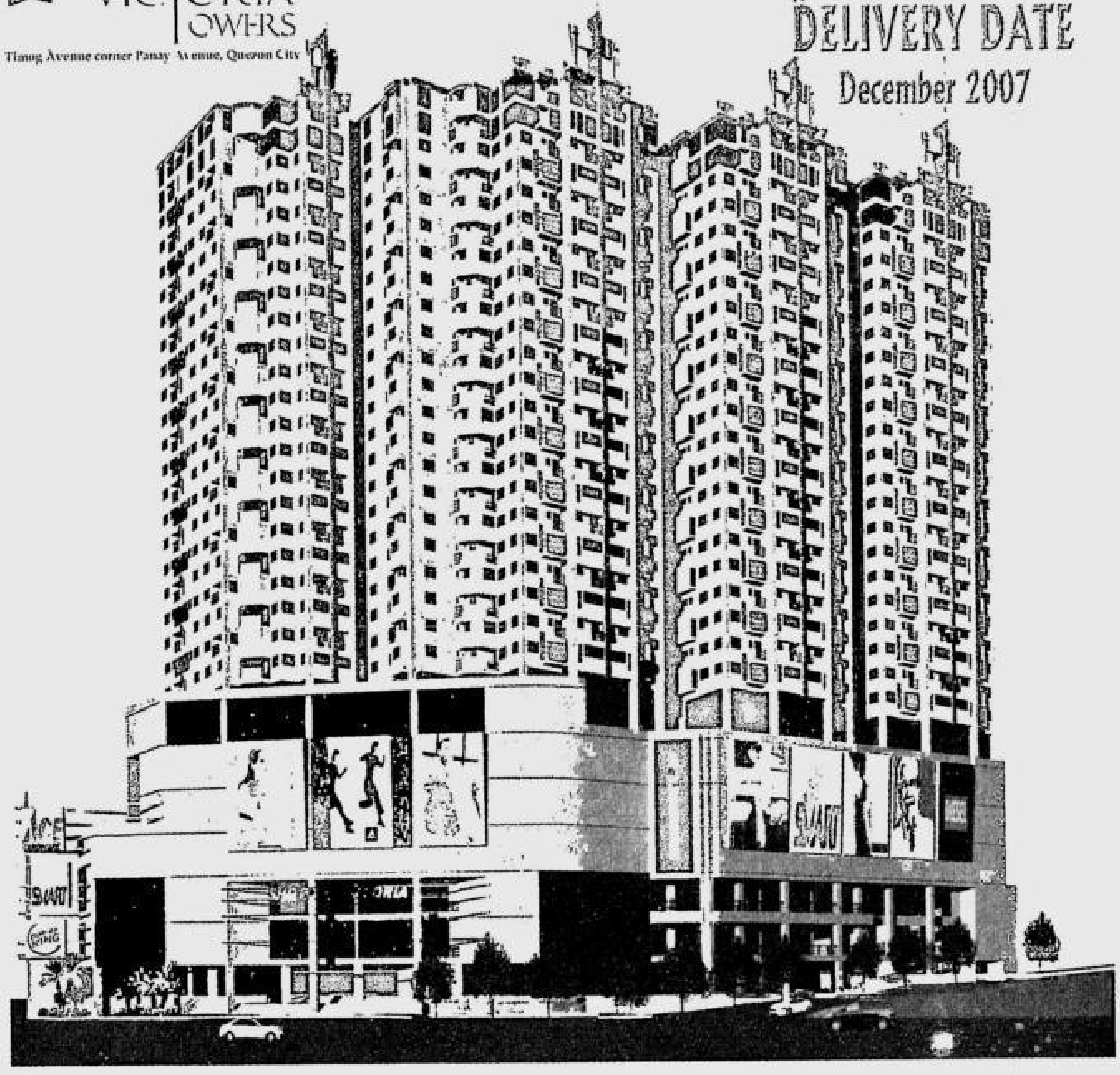

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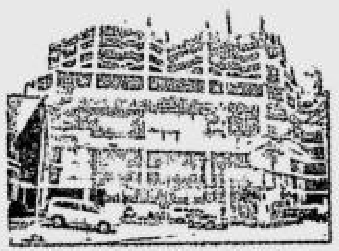

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CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION FACTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

INFANT MORTALITY

- **The infant mortality rate in the Philippines has declined from 34 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1993 to 29 deaths in 2003.** *(National Demographic and Health Survey 2003)*

- **Infant mortality correlates with the quality of maternal and child care accessible to mothers and children.** Mortality levels in urban areas are much lower than those in the rural areas. Mortality is inversely related to the mother's education level and wealth status *(National Demographic and Health Survey 2003)*

- **54% of infants in the Philippines have an elevated mortality risk due to the following factors:** The mother is too young (below age 18) or too old (age 35 and older), the birth interval is too short (less than two years) or the mother has had too many prior births (more than three) *(National Demographic and Health Survey 2003)*

- **Top 10 causes of infant mortality** *(DOH Philippine Health Statistics 2002)*

1.	Various perinatal conditions*	42.8%
2.	Pneumonia	11.4%
3.	Bacterial sepsis**	5.1%
4.	Diarrhea/ Gastroenteritis	5.1%
5.	Congenital malformation of the heart	4.7%
6.	Congenital pneumonia	3.0%
7.	Other congenital malformation	2.1%
8.	Disorders related to short gestation and low birth weight	2.1%
9.	Septicemia	1.8%
10.	Measles	1.8%

* stillbirth,asphyxia,jaundice, entangled umbilical cord etc.

**Caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi and other parasites entering the baby's body from the mother either during pregnancy, labor or delivery. Bacteria may also be transmitted through medical equipment such as catheters, IV tubes and other surgical equipment.

BREASTFEEDING RATE

- **Breastfeeding in the Philippines remains steady between 87% and 88% since 1993.** *(National Demographic and Health Survey 2003)*

- **The Philippines has a HIGHER EVER-BREASTFED RATE than the United States and selected European countries.** *(WHO Global Data Bank on Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding)*

Philippines (1998)	88%
Germany (1998)	86%
Italy (1995)	85%
Netherlands (2001)	75%
UK (2000)	69%
USA (1998)	64%
France (1998)	49%

- **The average duration of breastfeeding increased from 12 months in 1998 to 14 months in 2003.** *(National Demographic and Health Survey 2003)*

INFANT FORMULA USAGE

- **Consumption of infant formulas declined by 3%, from 12% to 9%** *(2005 AC Nielsen Retail Audit)*

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Armored van driver in Skyway mishap may face raps

By Tarra Quismundo

THE DRIVER OF THE ARMORED VAN that fell early Wednesday night from the Skyway onto vehicles below in Makati City could face criminal charges.

The incident killed a bank teller and injured four others. The driver, Reynaldo Nier, is himself in critical condition because of injuries he sustained during the crash. Four other vehicles were damaged.

Insp. Oscar Alicando, investigator from the Makati Traffic Enforcement Unit, said yesterday that Nier could be held liable for the accident.

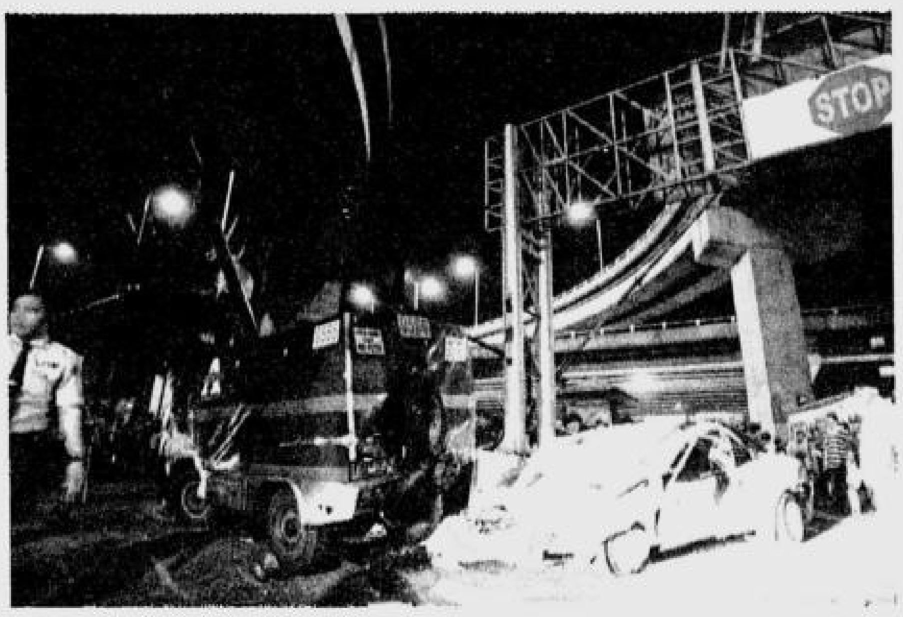
"The van may have been going fast on its way to the exit. The driver maybe liable for reckless imprudence resulting in homicide and physical injuries," Alicando told the INQUIRER.

Nier, 38, was driving the armored van (TEP-633) northbound along the Skyway toward the turn to the Arnaiz Avenue exit around 5:45 p.m. on Wednesday when it fell, landing onto vehicles below.

One of his passengers, bank teller Emmanuel Magnaye, 25, was killed on the spot while another passenger, Alfonso Ferrer, 32, was seriously injured. Police said the van was traveling from a bank branch in Calamba City to the Makati Central Business District when the accident happened.

The fall crushed the rear of a white Toyota Revo (XDD-327) and slightly damaged a Mitsubishi Adventure (XSW-733) and two Honda Civics (plate numbers UUV-242 and WCU-372) that were at the intersection of Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road) and President Sergio Osmeña Highway.

Alicando said two passengers of the Revo also suffered minor injuries and were both brought to the Makati Medical Center for treatment.



ONE PERSON was killed and four others were hurt when a van fell from the Skyway, damaging four other vehicles in Makati City and creating a huge traffic jam early Wednesday evening.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Provincial Government of Bukidnon

Project Reference Number : 300-07-05
Name of the Project : Supply & Delivery of 4 units Ambulance & 4 units Medical Service Shuttle
Location of the Project : Provincial Governor's Office

Standard Form Number : SF-GOOD-05
Revised on: July 28, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **Provincial Government of Bukidnon**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project

Name of Project	**SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF 4 units Ambulance & 4 units Medical Service Shuttle**
Location	**Provincial Governor's Office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City**
Brief Description	**For the use of the Provincial Hospitals of Bukidnon**
Approved Budget For the Contract	**Seven Million Seven Hundred Twenty Seven Thousand Pesos (P 7,727,000.00)**
Project Completion/ Duration	**Thirty (30) Calendar Days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed**

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Pre-Bidding Conference Performance Security, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

	Activities	Schedule	Venue
1.	Posting of IAEB at the Provincial Website, GEPS & conspicuous places	January 18-29, 2007	Provincial Website, GEPS, Vicinity of PGSO, PGO, PTO & BAC Office
2.	Issuance of Bid Documents	January 29-31, 2007	PGSO, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon
3.	Pre-bid Conference	January 31, 2007 2:00 P.M.	BAC Conference Room Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
4.	Opening of Bids	February 14, 2007 2:00 P.M.	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
5.	Bid Evaluation	February 16, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
6.	Post-Qualification	February 19, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
7.	Notice of Award	February 22, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City

Bid documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable Bid documents fee in the amount of Three Thousand Pesos (P 3,000.00).

For inquiry, Please call Telephone Nos. 088-221-2537 and 088-221-4820

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved

(Sgd.) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Jan. 19 & 26, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ORIENTAL NEGROS
Municipality of Siaton
SIATON BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

JBIC LOAN PH-P200

SECONDARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCHOOL FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) through the Department of Education has received an Official Development Assistance (ODA) Loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) towards the financing of the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP) last December 28, 1999 It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for the construction of different school buildings in the Municipality of Siaton as follows:

Project Description	School	Location
One Storey, Library Bldg w/ Guidance and Faculty Room One Storey, Science Laboratory Bldg. One Storey, Industrial Arts Bldg. One Storey, Home Economics Bldg. One Storey, 4-Classroom Bldg. w/ Toilet	Candugay NHS	Barangay Candugay, Siaton

2. Disbursement of the ODA Loan from JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of Loan Agreement PH-P200. No party other than the Department of Education shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claims to loan proceeds
3. The Local Government Unit of **Siaton** now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders to enter into contract based on award for the **Construction of School Buildings in Candugay NHS** which is envisioned to be completed within **One hundred twenty (120)** calendar days.
4. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the JBIC's Local Competitive Bidding procedures and is open to all Bidder's from eligible source countries as defined in the *"Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC Loans."*
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders upon submission of the Letter of Intent (LOI) and payment of a non-refundable fee of **Php 2,000.00** from the SEDIP-NPMO, DepED Division of **Oriental Negros** and the BAC Office of **Siaton**. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative, which will be issued on **February 1, 2007** and not later than **February 8, 2007; 5:00 PM.**
6. The BAC-**Siaton** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on **February 12, 2007; 9:00 AM** at the **BAC Office of Siaton**.
7. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the **BAC Office, Siaton** on or before **February 23, 2007; 9:00 AM**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in either of the following forms; cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft, irrevocable letter of credit or a bank guarantee in an amount equivalent to:

School	Project Description	Bid Security
Candugay NHS	1-Storey Science Laboratory Building 1-Storey Industrial Arts Building 1-Storey Home Economics Building 1-Storey 4-Classroom Bldg. w/ Toilet 1-Storey Library Bldg. w/ Guidance and Faculty Room	Php 219,250.00

8. Late Bids will not be accepted. The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) will only be disclosed by BAC after the opening of bids in accordance with the Instruction to Bidders. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder or its authorized representatives who choose to attend the opening of Bids.
9. JBIC requires that all bidders and contractors, as well as the LGU and DepED-SEDIP, shall observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC:

a). will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;

b.) will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a stated period of time if it, at any time determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing another contract financed in part from JBIC ODA Loans or other Japanese ODA.

10. The BAC of **Siaton** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) DARIO ARBOLADO
BAC Chairman

(PDI – January 26, 2007)

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4 vendors arrested for dog meat trade

By Margaux C. Ortiz

FOUR VENDORS WERE ARRESTED early yesterday morning as some 80 kilos of dog meat were confiscated in Quiapo, Manila by operatives of the Manila Police District (MPD).

Dulce Alcalde, 45; Jerome de la Cruz, 32; and two minors believed to be involved in the profitable dog meat trade were nabbed at the Quinta Market around 2 a.m., according to a report of the MPD Sta. Cruz Station.

Police said the suspects could be charged with violation of Republic Act No. 8485 or the Animal Welfare Law and City Ordinance 828 that seeks to prevent cruelty to animals.

Alcalde reportedly admitted she and her companions engaged in illegal dog meat trade because of customer demand. She said the meat cargo, sold for P120 per kilo, was to be sent to Baguio City.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said he instructed the police and the city's veterinary inspection board to watch out for dog meat vendors. "Eating dog meat is unacceptable because dogs are pets and companion animals," Atienza said.

An animal welfare group said earlier that dog meat consumption was not only cruel to man's best friend but could also be fatal to the person who ate the meat.

The Animal Kingdom Foundation Inc. (AKF) issued the warning following the death last year of a 4-year-old girl who was given dog meat by neighbors who were having a drinking session.

An AKF veterinarian said the girl could have been infected with rabies. He explained that the virus from meat from a rabid dog could enter the nerve endings through decayed or loose tooth or bleeding gums. The virus then passes through the lymph nodes and multiplies in the brain, resulting in the death of the victim.

He said the incubation period for rabies could range from 4-6 weeks to 1-5 years.

The AKF added that eating healthy dogs could be as dangerous as eating rabid ones because meat traders usually butchered the animals in unsanitary slaughterhouses.

DID YOU KNOW

ACCORDING to a 2005 survey by the National Statistics Office, about 1.3 million Filipinos had worked abroad from April to September 2005. Of this number, 18.4 percent or about 240,000 come from Metro Manila and 17.1 percent or more than 220,000 are from Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon). Only around 19,000 or 1.4 percent come from Mimaropa (Occidental and Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan).

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF CANCELLATION OF AWARD

Notice is hereby given that the lot awards of the following beneficiaries in Dagat-Dagatan Development Project are hereby CANCELLED immediately in view of their failure to comply with the conditions of their awards such as non-occupancy, non-payment of their monthly amortization and sold their awarded lots without the consent of the Authority thereof:

	NAME OF AWARDEE	PHASE	OLD BLK.	OLD LOT	NEW BLK.	NEW LOT
1.	ESTANISLAO ALFANTA	I-A	28	8	13	8
2.	LEONCIO G. NUQUE	I-A	33	5	18	5
3.	JESUS RAMPULA	I-A	36	49	21	49
4.	CONCHITA RAYMUNDO (w)	I-A	27	17	12	17
5.	MIGUEL SABANAL	I-A	36	35	21	35
6.	BERNABE MENDOZA	II A1	27C	85	27	85
7.	VIRGINIA TEODORO	II A1	22	94	22	94
8.	FRANCISCA YABUT	II A2	32B	49	32	49
9.	SALVADORA CASIDSID	II A3	16	9	16	9
10.	TOMAS HIBAYA	II A3	9B	18	9	167
11.	LORENZO DERDER	II A4	18	29	18	29
12.	LEONOR DIMANLIG	II A4	38G	13	38G	13
13.	NENITA LARDIZABAL	II A4	38G	23	38G	23
14.	CORNELIO OQUENDO	II A4	37F	15	37F	15
15.	EMILIO BAQUIRAN	III-C	9A	13	9A	13
16.	CARLOS CUELA	III-C	11F	21	8	15
17.	ROGELIO DALIENG	III-C	3B	22	3B	22
18.	MA. LUISA JARATA	III-C	3J	4	3J	4
19.	MONICA KING	III-C	8E	30	8E	30
20.	DULCE MERCADO	III-C	3J	5	3J	5
21.	ERNESTO PAJARES	III-C	14E	21	7	28
22.	ELENO TIMBREZA	III-C	3M	14	3M	14
23.	ELIZABETH CALOING	III-D	5	65	5	65
24.	ELISA DOMINGO	III-D	29	18	29	18
25.	ADELAIDA FORTIN	III-D	30	27	30	27
26.	PAULINO MABUTAS	III-D	19	42	19	42
27.	SUSANA HERMIDA	III-D	32	11	32	11
28.	HERNAME PERATER	III-D	31	25	31	25
29.	ENRIQUETA SANTOS	III-D	9	48	9	48
30.	ROSALINA SANTOS	III-D	4	36	4	36
31.	MELITA TOBIAS	III-D	19	63	19	63
32.	FRANCISCO TRAIFALGAR	III-D	29	77	29	77
33.	DEMETRIO CATADMAN, JR.	III-E1	1B	32	1	244
34.	TERESITA ORSAL	III-E1	2F	1	2	79
35.	ESTANISLAWA LACDAN (W)	III-E1	10G	29	10	29
36.	SOCORRO NARAGDAO	III-E1	15C	14	15	49
37.	RUBEN JESUS ASUNCION, JR.	III-E2	44B	4	5B	4
38.	ELIZA BALDOVINO	III-E2	43D	11	4D	11
39.	ALICIA BELLEZA	III-E2	48J	17	9J	17
40.	ANA BONIFACIO	III-E2	49D	34	10D	34
41.	ZENAIDA CALANG	III-E2	45G	24	6G	24
42.	MARINA DE GUZMAN	III-E2	45H	10	6H	10
43.	EDUARDO ESPIRITU	III-E2	46A	23	7A	23
44.	CORAZON RAMOS	III-E2	49K	49	29	49
45.	RICKY DIANO	III-F1	34E	4	1	7
46.	DANTE JAVIER	III-F1	30C	12	1	01
47.	AMPARO MESINA	III-F1	33E	11	18	22
48.	REYNALDO SANTOS	III-F1	39K	1	4	2
49.	SALVADOR VITALICIO	III-F1	33L	28	4	3
50.	ERNESTO PALILEO	III-F2	57B	27	6B	27

(Sgd.) FEDERICO A. LAXA
General Manager

(PDI – January 12, 19, & 26, 2007)

METRO-BRIEFS

End of chase

AFTER a yearlong manhunt, the police finally arrested on Wednesday night one of southern Metro Manila's most wanted people in Taguig City. Police cornered Bobby "Bambi" Tejero, 34, in his house at Sitio Maliwanag, Barangay Western Bicutan at past 8 p.m. the other day after a tip from a neighbor, said Senior Insp. Eufronio Obong Jr., chief of the city's Drug Enforcement Unit. Obong said Tejero, who often disguised himself as a woman to elude arrest, was caught allegedly using methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu, with a 21-year-old neighbor identified as Deo Gelin. The raiding team recovered two sachets of shabu, drug paraphernalia and a hand grenade from Tejero. The suspect is being linked to several drug, murder and holdup cases filed in other lower courts in the southern metropolis.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Lola Narita's book launch

NARITA Manuel-Gonzalez will launch five books for children and young adults at 4 p.m. today at the Jorge Vargas Museum, University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City. Fr. Robert Reyes will open the launching of Lola Narita's Books with a blessing for children, their parents and writers of children's stories. The event will feature as special guests the San Vicente School Rondalla and University of the Philippines Integrated School English Club members JC Cuevas, Nelson Capila, and Czairelle Guerra who will read excerpts from Lola Narita's stories, Honey Mae Sucgang and Nay Onor, an 88-year-old member of the Parish of the Holy Sacrifice's Tuesday Circle. Lola Narita, 88, wife of the late National Artist for Lieterature N.V.M. Gonzalez, is a retired teacher who taught Language Arts and Home Economics at the UP Elementary School. She earned her BSE and MHE degrees from the University of the Philippines and a Masters in Environment Education from California State University.

Knesset eyes action against embattled president

JERUSALEM—ISRAEL'S PARLIAMENT was considering Thursday whether to suspend or impeach President Moshe Katsav, who is facing rape charges, after the embattled leader, shaking with fury, rebuffed the accusations as "poisonous, horrible lies," part of a broad conspiracy against him.

On Wednesday Katsav asked the parliament to temporarily suspend him from office while he fought to clear his name. But momentum was building for lawmakers to open unprecedented impeachment proceedings against the president, and top officials, including the premier, beseeched Katsav to stop clinging to office and allow the nation to heal.

"Under these circumstances, there is no doubt in my mind that the president cannot continue to fulfill his position and he must leave the president's residence," Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said.

A parliamentary committee was due to convene Thursday to discuss Katsav's request for a temporary leave.

Polls published in the country's two mass-circulation dailies Thursday morning showed most Israelis demanding that Katsav quit now.

A poll of 516 people by the Dahaf institute for Yediot Ahronot showed 71 percent of respondents saying he should resign at once.

Maariv newspaper ran a survey of 400 people by pollsters Teleseker, which said 66.7 percent of those questioned thought Katsav should step down.

Resignation or impeachment would deprive Katsav of his presidential immunity. The 61-year-old Katsav's seven-year term is to end this summer. If he leaves office early, parliamentary speaker Dalia Itzik will become acting president until the parliament chooses a replacement.

Impeachment requires a three-fourths majority in parliament, and analysts said it might be difficult to reach such a number. In contrast, a majority in a parliamentary committee could approve his request to stand down temporarily.

Attorney General Meni Mazuz said that before officially pressing charges of rape, sexual assault and abuse of power, he would give the president an opportunity to plead his case.

During his speech Wednesday, Katsav said he would resign if officially indicted. "I will not stay in this house for one more second. I will resign," he pledged.

The presidency, a mainly ceremonial post, was traditionally filled by statesmen and national heroes who were expected to serve as the moral light of the country. Accusations that Katsav used his position to force himself on female employees have infuriated Israelis.

At a stormy, nationally televised speech at his official residence Wednesday night, Katsav professed his innocence and accused the police and media of working together to bring him down, using terms like "witch hunt" and "McCarthyism." He angrily pounded the podium and his voice cracked during a rambling diatribe that lasted nearly an hour.

"Don't believe the libel, the defamation, the lies. There is only one truth ... I am the target of one of the worst attacks in the history of the state of Israel," he said, gesturing with a pointed finger, pounding on the podium and shouting at a reporter. He pledged to "fight to my last breath, even if it means a world war, to clear my name."

He refused to answer questions from reporters in his first appearance before them since the scandal broke six months ago.

Thirty of parliament's 120 lawmakers—10 more than required—signed a motion to begin impeachment proceedings, and nearly 70 have already said they would vote to remove Katsav, according to the office of lawmaker Zehava Galon, who initiated the drive. *AP*

KATZAV gives a fiery press conference Jan. 24.

AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Panama's Noriega wants to go home again

NORIEGA

MIAMI—Former Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega wants to go home, spend time with his grandchildren and fight a murder case against him when he is released from a US prison later this year after serving 15 years for drug trafficking, his lawyer said on Wednesday. The Federal Bureau of Prisons on Tuesday set a Sept. 9 release date for Noriega, who was captured by US forces following the 1989 invasion of Panama and brought to Florida to face charges that he allowed Colombian traffickers to use his country as a transit hub for US-bound drugs. The former military strongman, who was effectively Panama's ruler from 1983 to 1989, was convicted in a Miami federal court in April 1992 of trafficking, racketeering and conspiracy. He was initially sentenced to 40 years in prison but the term was later reduced to 30 years. Noriega, 70, is unlikely to go free when he is released from the Miami-area penitentiary where he served most of his time in a specially built 23-square-meter cell dubbed the "presidential suite." He still faces legal problems in both Panama, where he was convicted in absentia 14 years ago for murder, and in France, where he is wanted for alleged money laundering.

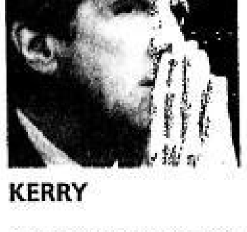
Reuters

Snowstorms kill 4, bring traffic chaos to Europe

PARIS—Snowstorms swept across western and central Europe for a second day on Wednesday, killing four people, stranding thousands of air travelers and leaving hundreds of drivers trapped on freezing, logjammed roads. A 72-year-old woman died in the southern Spanish city of Seville when a tree branch fell on her head in high winds, while three people died in German road accidents, including a bus driver, who had a head-on collision with a lorry. The sudden wintry snap, which follows a period of unseasonably warm weather across Europe, was nevertheless welcome relief for ski resorts in the French and Swiss Alps, many of which had previously been unable to open for lack of snow. Up to 70 cm of snow fell in the Swiss mountains, 20 cm in northern Spain and 30 cm in southern Germany. More snow was forecast over the next three days. More than 100,000 people were without power on Wednesday. Power lines to 65,000 homes in remote parts of central France were still down after being severed by falling trees and the weight of snow. Some 20,000 people in freezing northwestern Russia endured their fourth day of a blackout that was not due to end until Friday. In Austria, where 12,000 households were cut off, efforts to reconnect power lines were hampered by the risk of falling trees. Wintry weather left thousands of travelers stranded at airports in Britain, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy and Switzerland.

AFP

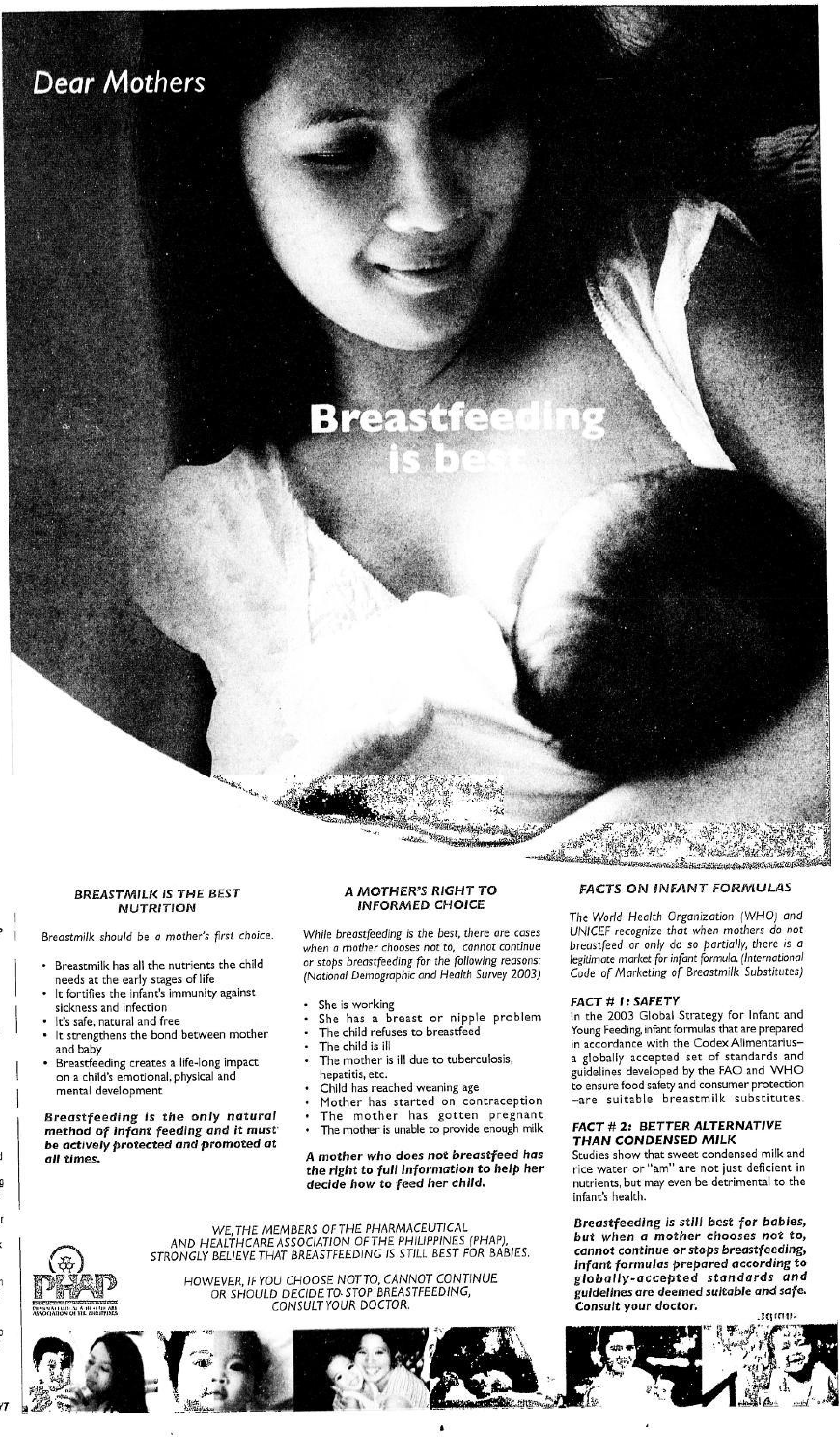
Kerry will not enter presidential race



KERRY

WASHINGTON—Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., who narrowly lost the presidency to President Bush in 2004, announced Wednesday that he would not proceed with a second bid for the White House, saying he preferred to use his position in the new Senate majority to press for an end to US involvement in Iraq. "We came close, certainly close enough to be tempted to try again," Kerry said, invoking his 2004 race, at the conclusion of a 30-minute speech attacking Bush's Iraq policy on the Senate floor. "There are powerful reasons to want to continue that fight now. But I've concluded that this isn't the time for me to mount a presidential campaign." Kerry's announcement, though it came in an unorthodox place, was not a surprise. He was bowing to a Democratic Party that was clearly unreceptive and had turned its attention to new candidates, in particular Senators Barack Obama of Illinois and Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, who both got into the race this month. Many Democrats had said they expected Kerry would decide not to run after assessing how much support he had in his party. Already, most of his aides from the 2004 campaign have moved on. Kerry, 63, intends to run for a fifth Senate term in 2008, an aide said.

NYT


Dear Mothers
Breastfeeding is best

BREASTMILK IS THE BEST NUTRITION

Breastmilk should be a mother's first choice.

- Breastmilk has all the nutrients the child needs at the early stages of life
- It fortifies the infant's immunity against sickness and infection
- It's safe, natural and free
- It strengthens the bond between mother and baby
- Breastfeeding creates a life-long impact on a child's emotional, physical and mental development

Breastfeeding is the only natural method of infant feeding and it must be actively protected and promoted at all times.

A MOTHER'S RIGHT TO INFORMED CHOICE

While breastfeeding is the best, there are cases when a mother chooses not to, cannot continue or stops breastfeeding for the following reasons: (National Demographic and Health Survey 2003)

- She is working
- She has a breast or nipple problem
- The child refuses to breastfeed
- The child is ill
- The mother is ill due to tuberculosis, hepatitis, etc.
- Child has reached weaning age
- Mother has started on contraception
- The mother has gotten pregnant
- The mother is unable to provide enough milk

A mother who does not breastfeed has the right to full information to help her decide how to feed her child.

FACTS ON INFANT FORMULAS

The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF recognize that when mothers do not breastfeed or only do so partially, there is a legitimate market for infant formula. (International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes)

FACT # 1: SAFETY
In the 2003 Global Strategy for Infant and Young Feeding, infant formulas that are prepared in accordance with the Codex Alimentarius–a globally accepted set of standards and guidelines developed by the FAO and WHO to ensure food safety and consumer protection –are suitable breastmilk substitutes.

FACT # 2: BETTER ALTERNATIVE THAN CONDENSED MILK
Studies show that sweet condensed milk and rice water or "am" are not just deficient in nutrients, but may even be detrimental to the infant's health.

Breastfeeding is still best for babies, but when a mother chooses not to, cannot continue or stops breastfeeding, infant formulas prepared according to globally-accepted standards and guidelines are deemed suitable and safe. Consult your doctor.

WE, THE MEMBERS OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL AND HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (PHAP), STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT BREASTFEEDING IS STILL BEST FOR BABIES.

HOWEVER, IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO, CANNOT CONTINUE OR SHOULD DECIDE TO STOP BREASTFEEDING, CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR.

PHAP
PHARMACEUTICAL & HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Senate panel rejects Bush troop 'surge'

A PILGRIM reading a religious book inside Imam Hussein shrine in Kerbala, Iraq Jan. 24. REUTERS

WASHINGTON—US PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush on Wednesday received a stinging rebuke of his Iraq policy, as a Senate panel approved a measure condemning his plan to pour more US troops into the war-ravaged country.

By a 12 to nine vote, the Senate foreign relations committee condemned Bush's plan to send an additional 21,500 troops to Iraq, just one day after he pleaded with Americans to give his plan a chance to work.

The measure now moves to the Senate floor for debate, possibly as early as next week.

But US Vice President Dick Cheney on Wednesday bluntly dismissed the congressional objections to increasing US troop levels in Iraq, telling CNN television: "It won't stop us."

The bipartisan resolution written by the panel's chairman, Joseph Biden, and fellow Democrat Carl Levin, along with Republican Senators Olympia Snowe and Chuck Hagel, criticized an escalation of US forces in Iraq as "not in the national interest."

"My intention was to send the first of many messages—direct and unequivocal—to the president: Stop what you are doing," Biden said during the hearing.

The Democratic chairman added that he was likely to submit even tougher, binding Iraq legislation if Bush fails to heed the message of the proposed symbolic measure.

Several lawmakers at Wednesday's hearing, including Sen. Robert Menendez, said the symbolic censure bill "is the least that can be done" to reflect Americans' broad displeasure with America's deeply unpopular Iraq policy.

The committee hearing was held after Bush delivered his annual State of the Union address Tuesday, in which he made his case for additional US troops in Iraq.

Unswayed, however, opposition Democrats after the speech accused the president of "recklessly" leading America into war and called for a withdrawal of US forces, in a blunt rebuttal to the president's address late Tuesday, and they continued to heap disdain on the president's Iraq strategy during Wednesday's hearing.

"The war in Iraq is fueling terrorism," said Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer. "It's draining our treasury ... It is weakening us in our own nation."

The draft bill calls on the United States to "transfer, under an appropriately expedited timeline, responsibility for internal security and halting sectarian violence in Iraq to the government of Iraq."

But it is only one of several proposals slamming Bush's surge plan, including some that would cap the number of troops, cut off funding for the deployment of additional troops or gradually pull US forces from Iraq altogether. *AFP*

Accused Canadian serial killer fed bodies to his pigs, jury told

NEW WESTMINSTER, CANADA—A hog farmer charged with murdering 26 women fed some of their bodies to his pigs, a jury heard Wednesday on the third day of the gruesome trial of accused serial killer Robert William Pickton.

"He would take them into (a) room and feed them to the pigs," Andy Bell, a one-time worker on Pickton's farm told police in a taped conversation, played during Pickton's interrogation.

"Oh, bull," shouted Pickton, when shown Bell's statement. "Funny stories in there, aren't they," he added, laughing.

The trial of Pickton for six of the murders of mostly drug-addicted prostitutes from a seedy Vancouver neighborhood opened Monday with a gush of gruesome and shocking details offered by prosecutors.

Pickton, who pleaded innocent to the six murders, will stand trial for 20 others at a later date.

But police suspect him in the disappearances of some 65 women from the Vancouver neighborhood over several years. On Monday prosecutor Derrill Prevett said that while in prison Pickton had indicated to an undercover policeman that he had killed 49 women in all, and had hoped to kill one more to make it "an even 50."

On Monday Prevett also told jurors that police had found DNA evidence from both Pickton and Mona Wilson, one of the alleged victims, on a gun and a dildo in his trailer home.

Other evidence, he said, included two women's heads, hands and parts of their feet police found stuffed in buckets in a workshop freezer on Pickton's suburban farm.

But in a taped interrogation played to the jury Wednesday, Pickton told a policemen he used the plastic dildo as a silencer for the gun when he shot boars with his .22 cal. gun.

"I shouldn't be talking but I'll tell you this, ah, I use the .22 sometimes, I do big, big boars," he told police sergeant Bill Fordy.

The gun was loud, said Pickton, so he "put plastic around it, just to quieten the noise down a little bit." AFP

World's oldest 'no longer wanted to live'

EMILIANO Mercado del Toro in photo taken Jan. 20, 2005. AP

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO—The world's oldest person, Emiliano Mercado del Toro, died Wednesday in his Puerto Rico home at the age of 115, his family said.

"Don Emiliano," as he was known in the US commonwealth island, died after being struck by fever and breathing problems, his niece Tomasita Ruiz told local radio.

"He had asthma overnight and died in the morning," said Ruiz, whose uncle died at her home in Isabela in the northwest.

Del Toro, who would have turned 116 in August, had lost the will to live, she said.

"Sometimes he would shout that he no longer wanted to live. He was tired of living," Ruiz said.

Born on August 21, 1891 in Cabo Rojo in the Caribbean island's southwest, he was 115 years, five months and three days old when he died.

The Guinness World Records book named him the oldest man in the world in January 2005. He became the world's oldest person in December after an American woman, Elizabeth Bolden, died at 116. *AFP*

An appeal to Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista, and our distinguished Councilors

Compel Federal Land to follow the Quezon City Zoning Ordinance in building the Capital Towers Project

We, the residents of Montgomery Place & Le Mariche hereby manifest our opposition to "The Capital Towers" project that will rise on E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave. in front of the National Children's Hospital & Trinity University:

1 **We oppose Federal Land's request for an Exception to the Commercial 2 (C2) classification of the area under the Amended Quezon City Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.** This will allow them to build beyond the prescribed height and density limits of our area which is of great concern to the surrounding residential communities. Right now, Federal Land plans to build 3 towers - one 38 storey and two 41 storey structures - totaling more than 1,300 new units on a 0.88 hectare lot.

2 **We oppose Federal Land's request for an Exception to Article VI, Section 4, No. 13 of the Quezon City Zoning Ordinance which requires a 1:1 ratio between parking spaces and condominium units.** They want a 1:3 ratio claiming that their target market is composed primarily of public transportation users. Given that their smallest unit costs Php65,000.00 per sqm, it's unlikely that anyone willing to spend that much does not own or will not aspire for a car.

3 **We are convinced that the project is hastily planned and that the impact on traffic, parking, flooding, water, sewage, soil cave-in, natural light, air, privacy and the effects of construction to our communities have been de-emphasized.** We have sat through presentations during the public hearings and we believe that FL's findings are incomplete and inadequate. We want their technical studies to be assessed by our own consultants.

4 **We protest in the strongest possible terms the blatant pre-selling of the project while our environmental concerns have not been addressed.** To date, the HLURB has certified that no License to Sell has been issued. The HLURB, in a Notice of Violation dated 30 November 2006, strongly reprimanded Federal Land and fined them. Despite this, they continue to market the project in invitation-only gatherings.

Recently, officials of certain barangays in District IV signed a manifesto in favor of the Capital Towers because of its "monetary benefits." **These benefits were merely alleged and never substantiated nor quantified by Federal Land or Barangay Kalusugan during several public hearings held at QC Hall.** The QC Zoning Ordinance in no uncertain terms, considers paramount the rights of existing communities to public health, safety and welfare. Thus, the burden is on Federal Land to prove that the Capital Towers project upholds these rights.

To summarize, by granting the exception, Federal Land will be allowed to build a massive development on E. Rodriguez Sr. which lacks sustainable infrastructure. We already experience air pollution, traffic jams, and flash floods on a regular basis. Adding 1,300 new households will adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare of existing and future residents in this congested area.

We urge the QC Council led by **Vice-Mayor Herbert Bautista & Majority Floor Leader Ariel Inton Jr.** to vote on the basis of Responsible Development:

- **Deny all applications for permits of The Capital Towers as it is currently planned or conceptualized.**
- **Deny the application for the Certificate of Exception from the QC Zoning Ordinance.**
- **Compel Federal Land to apply for permits on a per building basis.**

We believe that true progress is not measured by the height and breadth of physical structures nor the promise of economic gain. True progress is achieved when the laws and ordinances that envision to protect the right of every private citizen to health, safety and a decent quality of life are duly administered and enforced.

Moses Catan, President, MPHA

Winston Lim, President, LMHA

Updates: http://www.montgomeryplace.net • **Contact us:** noexceptions@montgomeryplace.net • This is a paid advertisement.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Suns shine; Pacers spoil Shaq's return /A22.

SPORTS

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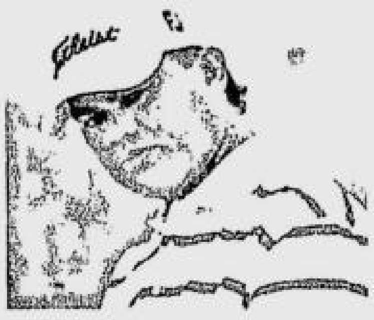
Open gets FG, ICTSI support /A23



Beermen, Kings target 2-0 semis leads

GAMES TODAY (Araneta Coliseum)
4:35 p.m.— Barangay Ginebra vs Talk 'N Text
7:20 p.m.— Red Bull vs San Miguel

RED BULL LACKED WHAT ITS COACH said were the "finishing touches" that would have given the Barako a good start in their Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup semifinal series.

Talk 'N Text, the other side that was on the losing end on Wednesday, meanwhile, fell so far behind that the Phone Pals looked like they weren't even able to touch their foes.

Two nights after sputtering in the fourth quarter control to lose, the Barako try to level their best-of-seven series with San Miguel today even as the Phone Pals also take the Araneta Coliseum floor looking to at least make a fight out of their Game 2 clash with Barangay Ginebra.

Red Bull and the Beermen tangle in the 7:20 contest, with the Barako itching for redemption—and the series-tying win—after failing to finish off San Miguel despite flaunting complete control more than three-fourths of the way.

Ginebra shoots for a similar 2-0 lead against the Phone Pals at 4:35 p.m.

"The fact that we led (in the game by 11 points at one stage) tells us something," Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao said yesterday. "We just lacked the finishing touches (to close out the game) because our running game didn't really click."

The Barako got sideswiped by a rampaging San Miguel juggernaut led by Dondon Hontiveros and Danny Ildefonso in the fourth period Wednesday as the Beermen pounded out a 114-109 decision.

Ginebra, on the other hand, was so fluid from the second quarter on that the Gin Kings led by as many as 29 points before settling for a 115-100 crushing of the Phone Pals.

Results on Wednesday were completely unexpected, with Red Bull and Talk 'N Text coming into the game the winners of their last three outings and the Beermen and the Kings supposed to be rusty after month-long breaks.

And now that both have obviously shaken off what little rust there was, the road seems to be looking rosy for the Beermen and the Kings in their bid to move closer to a best-of-seven championship series made in heaven.

"One win does not tell me anything, other than it's 1-0," Ginebra's Jong Uichico had said. "It sure is nice to be 1-0 up, but this win does not in any way make a series, nor will it prove to be the turning point of such a long series." *Musong R. Castillo*

Caguioa's 34, PBA ref create quite a stir

FROM MARK CAGUIOA'S 34 POINTS TO a referee being tapped to officiate a game between Asia's powerhouses, there's a growing buzz around the Philippine Basketball Association's Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup semifinals.

In a league that has seen spectacular individual scoring performances from the all-time greats, Caguioa's 34 points in Barangay Ginebra's 115-100 victory over Talk 'N Text in Game 1 of the best-of-seven series should have passed for nothing but a minor blip in the conference.

Especially since Caguioa has already breached the 30-point barrier 20 times since joining the league in 2001.

Except that it came against Talk 'N Text, a team the fiery 6-foot-1 guard seems to have lots of fun scoring against.

Of his 11 highest total outputs as a pro, four came against Talk 'N Text. Of his seven highest production, three were against the Phone Pals.

The other team Caguioa loves scoring against is Red Bull, which the Kings gunner has riddled by at least 30 points six times. Coincidence or not, the Barakos drafted as the No. 1 overall pick in 2001 Willie Miller, bypassing Caguioa, who was picked third.

Meanwhile, a PBA referee has been tapped as the neutral official in a Korean Basketball League-Chinese Basketball Association dual meet.

Roberto Ting Jr., who worked as an international referee before, will join a Korean ref and a Chinese counterpart in the

CAGUIOA/ A24

Henkel, Cebuana prevail

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Olivarez College Sports Center*)
2 p.m.—Cebuana Lhuillier vs Harbour Centre
4 p.m.—Mail and More vs Henkel Sista

By Jasmine W. Payo

HENKEL SISTA SILENCED Magnolia's top gunners to hammer out a 66-61 victory in the PBL Silver Cup yesterday at the Emilio Aguinaldo College Gym.

Marcy Arellano paced the Super Sealers' balance charge with 11 points, while Lawrence Bonus, Khiel Misa and Conrad Bauzon took over the scoring in the final period as Henkel Sista completed the quarterfinal cast.

"Our target was to let them give the ball to (Sam) Ekwe and stop their shooters," said Sista coach Caloy Garcia.

Ekwe, Magnolia's 6-foot-8 Nigerian slotman, poured in 19 points and hauled 19 rebounds. But top gunners Bonbon Custodio and Jeff Chan failed to figure in the offensive equation.

Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala earlier clinched the third quarterfinal berth after an 81-72 triumph over TeleTech.

The Moneymen turned to Ken Bono, Doug Kramer and Macky Escalona in the stretch to avert a meltdown and regain control of the match in the final two minutes.

"We knew TeleTech was tough, we needed to match their energy," said Moneymen coach Luigi Trillo.

MAGNOLIA'S Jeff Tans sneaks a lay-up under the arms of Henkel Sista's Jam Alfad after driving past a throng of defenders. RYAN LIM

Bono, the reigning UAAP MVP, unloaded a key triple that gave the Moneymen a 73-71 lead. The burly center followed it up with a basket at the 1:33 mark to finish with a game-high 26 points.

Stepping up at crunch time, Kramer and Escalona combined for 10 points in the final six minutes.

Custodio shot a measly five points after averaging 26.5 in the Spinners' last two wins. Chan, coming off a 23-point performance, went 0-for-6 in 21 minutes.

The Super Sealers advanced against the Mail and More Comets while Cebuana Lhuillier moves up against the Harbour Centre Port Masters.

Both Mail and More and Harbour Centre need only to win once to reach the semis where Hapee-PCU and Toyota Otis are waiting.

The Titans spooked the Moneymen with a 10-0 blast sandwiched by two triples from Kim Valenzuela to wrest the lead at 64-61 early in the fourth period.

Kramer and Escalona nailed three of their four free throw shots for a 64-all deadlock, but another Titans spurt left the Moneymen trailing again at 71-64.

Just when the Titans seemed poised to pull away, Kramer and Escalona started attacking the basket to move within a point, 71-70, with 2:30 minutes left.

Bono added five points to cap the Moneymen's pivotal 11-0 rally for a 75-71 advantage at the 1:33 mark.

The scores:

First Game

CEBUANA LHUILLIER 81—Bono 26, Oreta 23, Escalona 11, Kramer 10, Yee 4, Abadia 3, Dulay 2, Dela Cuesta 2, Solis 0, Luanzon 0, Viardo 0.

TELETECH 72—Capus 15, Magpayo 13, Valenzuela 11, Villamin 9, Latoreno 7, Mercado 6, Tan 5, Estrada 0, Guerrero 0, Concha 0, Labagala 0, Doruelo 0.

Quarters: 13-15, 35-31, 61-54, 81 72

Second Game

HENKEL SISTA 66—Arellano 11, Bonus 10, Misa 10, Bauzon 9, Gregorio 8, Malabanan 5, Saldua 4, Alfad 4, Piñera 4, Eman 2, Robles 0.

MAGNOLIA 61—Ekwe 19, Escobal 14, Villanueva 9, Menor 6, Custodio 5, Aljamal 4, Rañeses 2, Gamalinda 2, Jones 0, Taganas 0, Angeles 0, Chan 0.

Quarters: 11-13, 30-25, 45-37, 66-61

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There's no flaw in process, SBP points out

By June Navarro

THE FLAW IN THE UNIFICATION PROCESS which the Basketball Association of the Philippines pointed out Wednesday had effectively been wiped out by an agreement entered into by BAP officials.

The Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas clarified this yesterday with PBA commissioner Noli Eala, the SBP's designated spokesperson, even scoring BAP officials "for their warped distortion of the truth."

"The problem with the BAP is that they always conveniently forget or deliberately disregard agreements entered into by their own officials," said Eala.

"Then, they (BAP officials) claim flaws in the process, which is simply their warped distortion of the truth," he added.

BAP acting president Christian Tan had insisted that the Fiba-endorsed communique forged between the BAP and Pilipinas Basketball last year was not followed to the letter when the SBP named the 25-man board instead of the composition of the board being elected during the "unity congress" by the entire BAP and PB membership.

However, SBP executive director Ricky Vargas said the SBP's constitution and bylaws called for a set of officers composed of 12 each from the BAP and PB, which both organizations will nominate, and a neutral official to form the 25-man board of trustees.

Vargas stressed that former BAP president Joey Lina and BAP chair Michele Lhuillier had affixed their signatures in the SBP constitution and by-laws crafted by the three-man panel of businessman Manny V. Pangilinan, Bernie Atienza of Pilipinas Basketball and Lina some months back.

"After that document was signed, Mr. Lina stepped down as BAP president," Vargas said.

"But it doesn't mean that if Lina resigned, what he signed was already considered null and void," added Vargas, who went with SBP chair Pangilinan, Eala, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and PLDT executive Al Panlilio to the Fiba headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland last weekend to brief Fiba officials on the progress of the unification process being undertaken by SBP.

Estrada took over as BAP president when Lina resigned only to be ousted when he forged a unity pact with Pangilian without consulting the BAP board.

According to the SBP constitution, an executive board composed of the chairman, vice chairman, president, executive vice president, executive director and treasurer, among others, would be elected to serve as interim officials.

Tan also questioned the interim capacity of the officials whom Eala said would be decided by acclamation during the unity congress set Feb. 5 at the Dusit Hotel in Makati City.

"There is a reason to the interim provision in the constitution and bylaws of the SBP. You have to go through a healing process and put a structure that will hold the entire organization and its membership," said Vargas.

EALA: Warped

The interim officials, he explained, would be tasked to put the house in order before another set of officers takes over in the 2008 SBP national elections.

Vargas also stressed that during the transitory period, the SBP would begin validating its membership.

The BAP boasts of 66 member organizations while the PB now has 28.

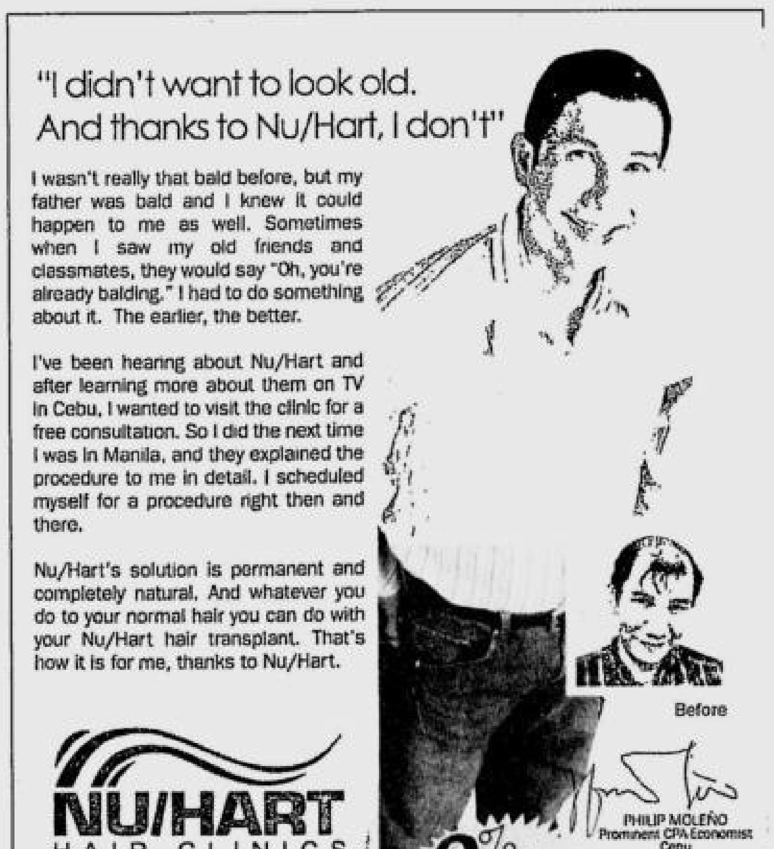
"To be quite frank about it, some BAP members don't exist anymore and some don't even fall under the SBP criteria for membership," said Vargas. "But just the same, we're including everybody."

On the election by acclamation, Eala said there's no need to submit the election of officers to the congress since under the SBP articles of incorporation, the board, and not the congress, would elect the officers.

The board, on the other hand, is chosen by the congress.

But in the case of the SBP, the three-man panel agreed that in the interim, the board will be composed of 12 members each from the PB and the BAP and one neutral member in order to expedite the formation of the new organization and regain accreditation.

"They agreed to this through Mr. Joey Lina, who in fact nominated 12 names in the interim board who were included in the approved and signed articles of incorporation," said Eala.



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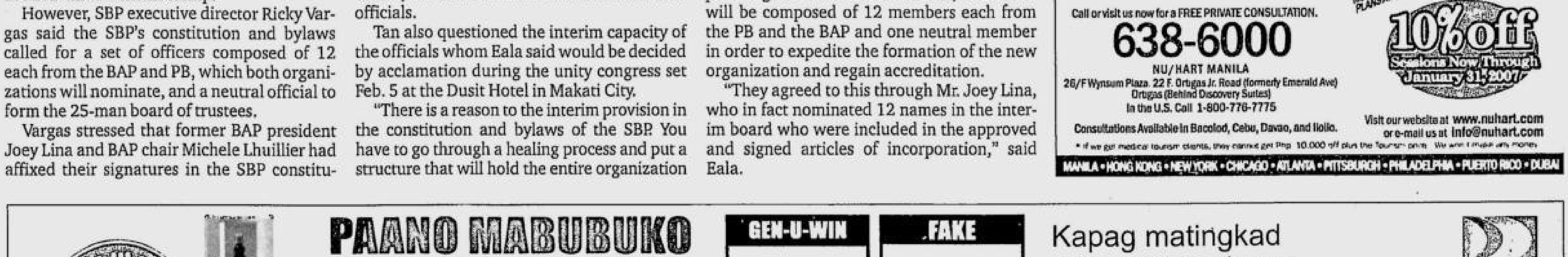

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Suns shine; Pacers spoil Shaq's return

NEW YORK—THE PHOENIX SUNS beat the New York Knicks 112-107 on Wednesday to record their second 15-game winning streak of the season.

Amare Stoudemire scored 30 points, 26 in the second half, as the Suns came alive in the third quarter to knock off the Knicks.

Phoenix (34-8) is the first team to have two 15-game winning streaks in a single season since the Los Angeles Lakers did it in the 1999-2000 season. The Suns will set a franchise record for consecutive wins if they beat the Bucks in Milwaukee on Friday.

Steve Nash had 22 points and 14 assists for the Suns, who scored 63 points in the second half and held off a fourth quarter comeback bid by New York.

New York scored 39 fourth-quarter points despite injuries to Stephon Marbury and Eddy Curry. Marbury sat out his first game of the season due to left knee tendonitis and Curry left the game with a strained left calf.

Jamal Crawford led New York (18-26) with 29 points and 11 assists while Curry had 25 points before leaving.

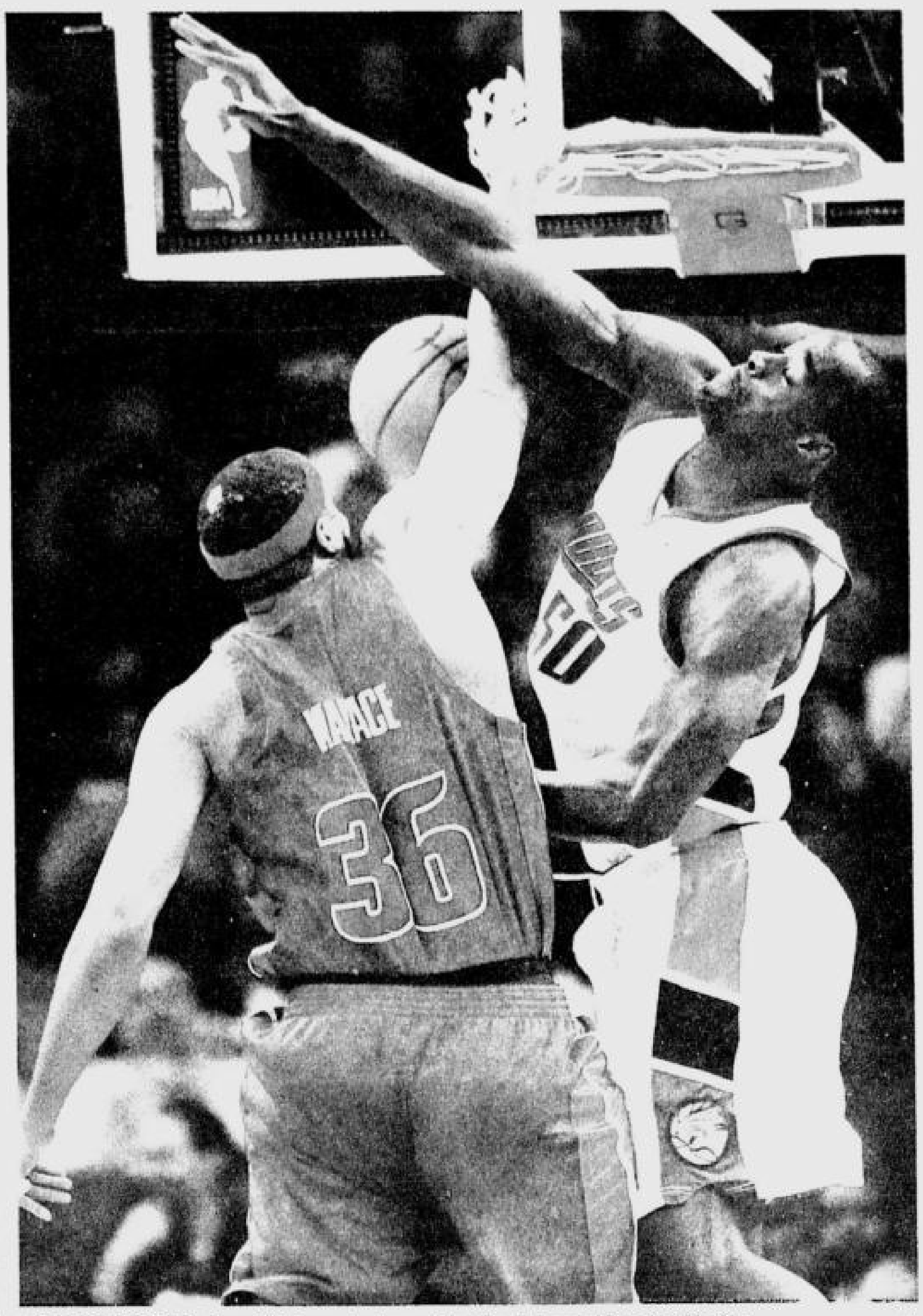
The Indiana Pacers rallied from a 20-point second half deficit to beat the Miami Heat 96-94 in overtime, spoiling the return of Shaquille O'Neal to the Heat lineup after 35 games.

Richard Hamilton scored 22 points and Rasheed Wallace added 20 as the Detroit Pistons won their third straight game, 103-92 over the Charlotte Bobcats.

The Philadelphia 76ers won on the road for just the third time this season, downing the Cleveland Cavaliers 118-115 in double overtime.

Chris Bosh scored a season-high 35 points as the Toronto Raptors rallied from a 15-point fourth quarter deficit to edge the New Orleans Hornets 90-88.

Reuters



THE PISTONS' Rasheed Wallace dunks against the Bobcats' Emeka Okafor. AP

Alcano ready to defend Korea title

REIGNING WORLD POOL CHAMPion Ronato "Ronnie Calamba" Alcano is looking forward to keeping his 10-ball title in the 2007 2nd Annual Korea Pro Pool Tour Championship set Feb. 10-13 at the Lotte Department Store in Incheon, Korea.

It will be the second major tournament for Alcano this year after finishing in the last eight in the 17th Annual All-Kansai 9-Ball Open last week in Osaka, Japan.

Alcano, who vowed to make up for his poor finish in Japan, and Carlo Biado are scheduled to arrive tomorrow from Osaka.

The 34-year-old Alcano, acknowledged by the US based Billiards Digest magazine as "The Most Improved Player," will be joined by World Pool Leaque champion Dennis Orcollo, upcoming Roberto Gomez and veteran campaigner Dondon Razalan in the Korean event organized by the Dragon Promotion outfits owned by Korean-American pool wizard Charlie Williams.

ALCANO

At stake is the top prize of $10,000 in the event which Alcano won in 2005. No tournament was held last year.

The 27-year-old Orcollo, who won two side events in the 2007 Derby City Classic in Kentucky, reached the round of 16 in the All-Kansai Open while Gomez, a former TV reporter, is fresh from winning the 9-ball tourney in Norway and finishing in the round-of-8 in the 10-ball division of "The Battle of Scandinavia" in Oslo.

The event will feature 64 of the world's top players from the US, Korea, Germany, Finland, and Japan, according to KPT president Cindy Lee.

Marlon Bernardino, contributor

SPORTSWATCH

Stallions lead GMA-7 Xavier golf

TEAM STALLIONS, SKIPPERED BY LAWRENCE COBANKIAT, SHOWED THE WAY with 3.5 points after the first leg of the GMA-7 Xavier Matchplay golf tournament at the Santa Elena Golf Club recently. The Stallions lost their first match before racking up three wins to take the lead by half a point over Team Tiger captained by Dennis Huang. In third place with 2 points was the youthful Team XS90s in the event organized by the Xavier School Batch 1975 for the benefit of the Xavier School Educational Trust Fund. Batch 72 of Team Dragons was in fourth position with 1.5 followed by Team CK and Team Colt 45 with 1 point each. Tournament chair Greg T. Yu said the finals will be held on Jan. 29.

Takbuhan sa Parokya ni Isko

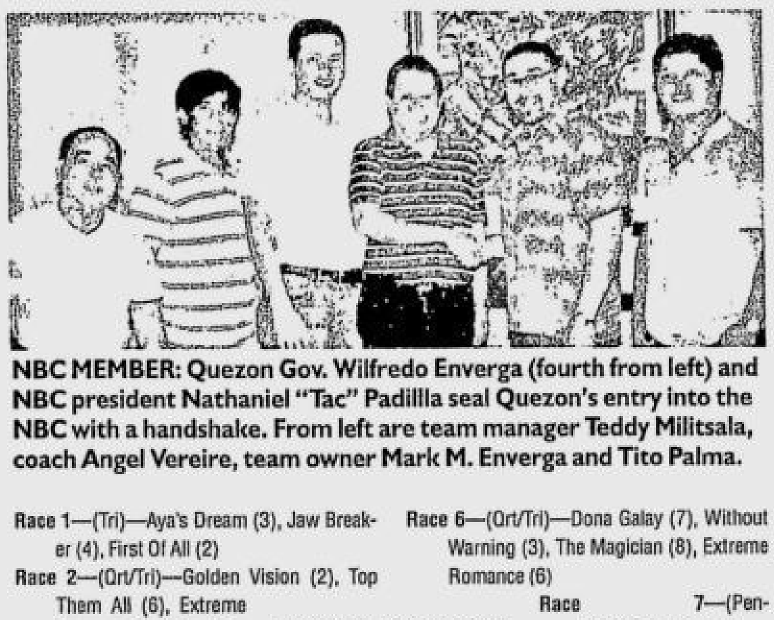
THE LOURDES SCHOOL OF MANDALUYONG-PARENTS TEACHERS ASSOCIAtion is sponsoring a Fun Run dubbed Takbuhan sa Parokya ni Isko on Feb. 11. The event aims to generate funds for the LSM-PTA projects like assistance to the St. Francis Parish. Lawyer Manjo Oyson, president, and Pippo Guiuan, Fun Run chair, said the 19th edition of LSM Fun Run would start at 6 a.m. The race features 3-K Run for the LSM community; 6-K and 10-K Runs open to all. Free T-shirts will be given to all runners. Race director Willie Adiaz said the LSM-PTA Fun Run could draw 1,000 running enthusiasts. Registration is on Feb. 5-7 at the Lourdes School of Mandaluyong, Shaw Boulevard during office hours. Look for Ms. Ann Florencio. Registration fee is P200 for alumni and guests.

80 entries in Makati International Derby

A DOZEN MORE BIG TIME COCKERS AND BREEDERS CONFIRMED YESTERday their participation in the Makati 8- Cock International Derby scheduled Feb. 5, 7 and 9 at the Makati Coliseum. Most notable among the registrants are Cavite breeder Gen-gen Arayata, co-champion in the recent 2007 World Slasher Cup and superstar Manny Pacquiao. Ricky Valencia, Raymond Velayo, Boy Royo, Pol Estrellado, Raymond Turla, Pete Ison, Pepito Ngo and R. Pineda also submitted their entries. Also raring to field their prized gladiators are Dink Fair and Jerry Cottam of Oklahoma, Rey Westal of New Mexico, Jerry Wesson of Iron City, Alabama, Jay Gentry of Lousiana, Jess Casey and Randy Hall of Texas, Jaime Bustle of Kentucky, Fil -Ams Aster Lopez, Joe Cuyugan and Zaldy Sandoval of California, Robert Dadis, Peter Sarte, Randy Tanaka and Randy Jugas of Hawaii. Call 895-6575 and 896-3545 (Joan or Stephanie).

SJC International Derby finals today

THE RECORD-SHATTERING SJC 8-COCK INTERNATIONAL DERBY ENTERS ITS championship round today at San Juan Coliseum, with 50 finalists gunning for the title and the guaranteed prize of P6 million. The 4- cock finals, featuring more than 100 fights start at 1 p.m. Among the top favorites are the entries of Adrian Manalansan, Boy Marzo, Mayor Ordonia, Arman Santos, Mayor Eddie Alarilla, Boy Royo, defending champion Pol Estrellado, boxing champ Manny Pacquiao, Jason Campell and Grady Malone of Alabama, Joseph Toralba of Louisiana, 2007 World Slasher Cup champion Patrick Antonio, Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud, Sonny Lagon and partner Bruce Barnette of Alabama, John Balberdi of Hawaii, Rudy Albano, Rep. Gerry "Boy" Espina, Mayor Buddy Dunca, Bobbit Ples and Popoy Taruc; Borgie Zoleta, Ruel Ricafort, Rey Briones, Dori Du, Mayor Alvarez, Jun Marasigan and Louie Cua. For info, call 725-5369 and 725-6563.



NBC MEMBER: Quezon Gov. Wilfredo Enverga (fourth from left) and NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padillla seal Quezon's entry into the NBC with a handshake. From left are team manager Teddy Militsala, coach Angel Vereire, team owner Mark M. Enverga and Tito Palma.

Bill tackling major PSC changes may have to wait next year – POC

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMmittee may have to wait for the next administration before its appeal to install major changes in the Philippine Sports Commission could push through.

With just a few sessions left before the House of Representatives ends its term, POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. doubted whether the bill the Olympic body filed with Congress last week could be accommodated.

The POC, through Rep. Renato Unico Jr., filed last week a bill amending and upgrading Republic Act 6847, the law that created the Philippine Sports Commission, the government arm for sports.

"We are pressed for time because the present Congress only has two weeks to wrap up its term," said Cojuangco. "There's no harm in trying so we filed it just the same."

Under the bill, the POC wants the PSC commissioners to come from a list recommended by the Olympic body.

The POC also batted for a fixed tenure of six years for commissioners while asking that the chairman be elevated to the cabinet.

"We will try to push for it again after the elections. But knowing Congress, it will take time before the congressmen could tackle the bill," said Cojuangco.

"A reorganization within the House is bound to happen as the new set of congressmen takes over. If ever, it could probably be passed in January next year at the earliest," said Cojuangco.

Should the bill be shelved for the next administration, the change in the PSC would only take effect after the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

The lower House is arranging a joint committee hearing for the committees of youth and sports, appropriations and ways and means on Tuesday to accommodate the bill filed by the POC.

But even POC vice president Monico Puentevella expressed doubts that the bill would see its fruition in the present term of the House.

"The biggest obstacle is the time constraints," said Puentevella.

Pacquiao doc helps Z, Boom Boom

Filipinos Z "The Dream" Gorres and Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista have turned to one very important personality in Los Angeles boxing who can help them absorb some punishment come fight night on Feb. 24.

Dr. Ed De la Vega, the acknowledged maker of the custom-made mouthpieces of superstar Manny Pacquiao, will lend his expertise by fitting them with their own set of mouthguards for their "Moment of Truth" bouts in Cebu City.

Gorres will challenge WBO super flyweight champ Fernando Montiel, while the undefeated Bautista trades leathers with Feider Viloria.

De la Vega visited the Wild Card Gym yesterday to watch Bautista spar against two very tough and wily Latino boxers, a fellow named "Speedy Gonzales" and Vicente Escobedo.

"Boom Boom appeared to be in excellent form although he appears to me that he is over his fighting weight of 122 lbs. When I brought my observation about Boom Boom's weight to Edito ALA Villamor, he gave me a no non-sense, straightforward answer: "Not to worry, Doc Ed, we still have a few weeks to go before the fight. As his trainer, I assure you, on the weigh-in day, we will be where we should be, 122 lbs," De la Vega said.

De la Vega also witnessed Gorres spar with the tall and lanky Eddie Leal and a kid named Mike Franco.

"Gorres was pure business. He took some hard shots but dished out plenty of his own. From my vantage position on the ringside where I was taking pictures, I can hear the grunts of Gorres' sparring partners every time he lands a solid shot, which incidentally was very often," reported De la Vega.

Gorres and Bautista will be fitted with new mouth guards this Sunday. *Salven Lagumbay, Contributor*

Z GORRES spars with Mike Franco.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

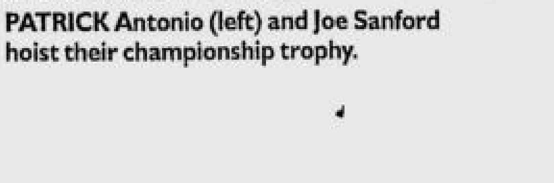
Race 1—(Tri)—Aya's Dream (3), Jaw Breaker (4), First Of All (2)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Golden Vision (2), Top Them All (6), Extreme Courage/Gen-Gen Spirit (4), Reality Show (5)
Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Bilingaling (3), Sports Illustrated (4), Itza Lemon (5), Rain Dancer/Royal Fleet (11), Love A Trick (6)
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—True Account (4), Cara Dura (6), Karma (5); Full of Fuey (2)
Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Reign of Fire (1), Pulilan Beauty (2), Red Anya (7), Real Material (4), Wine-Away (5)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Dona Galay (7), Without Warning (3), The Magician (8), Extreme Romance (6)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Shutter (1), Pride and Joy (8), Hello Jeanette (6), Virginia (4), Sand Peebles (7)
Race 8—(Qrt/Tri)—Just a Moment (5), Class Action (4), Sir Benjo (2), Capricorn Aida (6)
Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Kaiphia (6), Jay Nicole (1), Joint Account (9), King's Choice (4), War Bird (12), Dagger Look (5)

Antonio-Sanford tops World Slasher

THE FORMIDABLE TANDEM of *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio and California-based breeder Joe Sanford (AS PA Sagupaan Winning Line SSF) bagged the championship of the recent World Slasher Cup 8-Cock International Derby at the Araneta Coliseum.

The winning entry bested 123 other hopefuls by finishing with 7 wins and one loss. It was a sterling performance for Antonio, who won the WSC title for the third time. AS PA Sagupaan Winning Line SSF paraded superbly conditioned battlefowls from Sagupaan gamefarms which won all their assignments in the preliminaries and semifinals against JGT-CBB1 of Jorge Torres and Claude Bautista, Thunderbird 1 of Nene Araneta, JP Clear Creek of Bobby Fairchild and ARC SAN-SF, accordingly.

Entering the finals with six other entries undefeated, the tandem of Antonio and Sanford pounded Arioza & Batzam of Ting Arioza in the irst, LR Cherry Hill Binangonan of Gov. Ito Ynares and Larry Barleta in the second and Super Gonzales Brothers in the third before tasting a defeat in the last fight. Antonio acknowledged the support provided by the Sagupaan Winning Line Team.



PATRICK Antonio (left) and Joe Sanford hoist their championship trophy.

Chess probe result out soon—Pichay

THE NATIONAL CHESS FEDERATION of the Philippines is expected to announce in the next few weeks the result of its investigation of the game-fixing scam and the penalties for the guilty players.

PICHAY

NCFP president Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay Jr. said he would immediately convene the NCFP board once the investigating group finalizes its report.

"The board will hear the side of the accused. They will be given their day in court, and we will make sure that justice will prevail," said the Surigao del Sur lawmaker.

Meanwhile, International Master Jayson Gonzales, a member of the five-man investigating team, said evidence is strong against the eight accused players based on the reviewed score sheets of the 1st PGMA Cup, the National Inter-Provincial in Cagayan de Oro City and the National Championship last month in Manila .

Gonzales identified the players as International Master Ronald Dableo, NM Oliver Barbosa, WFM Sheerie Joy Lomibao, WNM Enerose Magno, 12-year-old WNM Christy Lamiel Bernales, Dino Ballecer, Rainier Labay and Merben Roque.

GM Mark Paragua and IM Darwin Laylo were not in the list, Gonzales pointed out, because the score sheet of last year's Tanauan Open was not submitted.

However, NCFP executive director lawyer Samuel Estimo said that he would push for a probe of the Tanauan Open results, adding that he had a strong evidence against the guilty players.

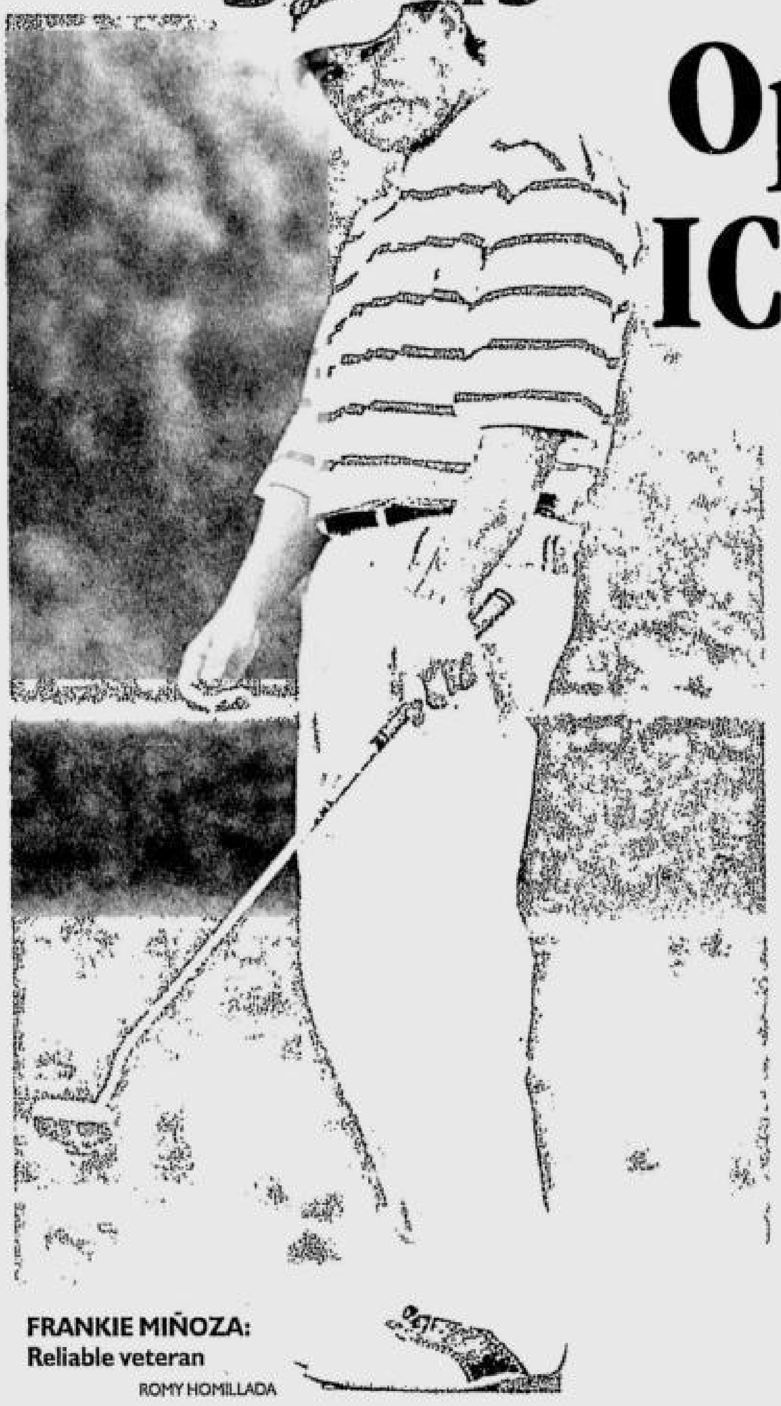
The probe team is headed by NCFP tournament chair Willie Abalos with international arbiter Gene Poliarco, national arbiters Elias Lao and Patrick Lee and Gonzales as members.

According to Estimo, it would require a two-thirds vote of the 15-man board to declare a player guilty.

He said the players will be given 30 days to refute the charges even as he assured fair treatment for the involved parties.

Meanwhile, Lomibao also denied the game-fixing charge, adding she's ready to prove her innocence before the NCFP board.

Also denying their involvement were Paragua, Magno and Ballecer. Tara Jade Aurelio-Dableo said her husband Ronald also was not guilty of game-fixing. Jomar Bernales had also cleared his daughter Christy Lamiel. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*


FRANKIE MIÑOZA: Reliable veteran
ROMY HOMILLADA

Open gets FG, ICTSI support

By Musong R. Castillo

THE FIRST GENTLEMAN FOUNDATION OF JOSE MIGUEL ARroyo and the International Containers Terminal Services Inc. of Enrique Razon are again putting up the $300,000 (around P14.9 million) prize money for the staging of the 91st edition of the Philippine Open next week at Wack Wack.

Organizers met late Wednesday to finalize the other details of the RP Open, including the pro-am event scheduled on Tuesday, Jan. 30.

Present during the meeting were Asian Tour director for development Patrick Young, National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP) president Leandro Mendoza, Wack Wack president Luis Tan, former president and Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and sports and games head Pablo Soon.

Serving as the third leg of this year's Asian Tour, the four-day event will be held Feb. 1-4 at Wack Wack's fabled East course with $47,500 at stake to the winner.

Frankie Miñoza, the Filipino legend who will play in the Open for the first time since 2002, leads the formidable local challenge that also includes rising Asian star Juvic Pagunsan and one-time Asian Tour winner Angelo Que.

Pagunsan, named as the Tour's top rookie last season, is one Filipino truly ripe to winning Asia's oldest national championship.

The 28-year-old, an ex-caddy from Binitin in Bacolod, has finished in the top 10 of each of the last four Opens and was its low amateur for three straight years prior to last year when he debuted as a pro and landed sixth.

Scott Strange, a moderately built long-hitter from Perth, Australia, is the defending champion.

Former Asian number one Thaworn Wiratchant of Thailand, ex-champions Rick Gibson of Canada, Wang Ter-chang of Chinese-Taipei and Adam Le Vesconte of Australia are also entered.

Precision, more than length, will be the key to winning the Open as the East course, one of the shortest on tour being just 7,053 yards long, has the tendency to penalize errant shots with its sun-baked fairways giving unpredictable bounces.

Pin placements will also be a factor in the event being supported by PLDT, Smart Communications, PAL and San Miguel Corporation.

Tinga Moto draws 6,000

OVER 6,150 RIDERS will vie for various titles at stake in tomorrow's first Mayor Freddie Tinga Cup Motocross at the Fast Track Motorsports Park in Upper Bicutan, Taguig City, in front of Camp Bagong Diwa. Top Filipino riders Glen Aguilar and Kenneth San Andres lead the entries in the premiere Pro 125 division of the event.

Both Aguilar and San Andres are gearing up to regain the crown for the Philippines in the 2007 season of the FIM-UAM Asian Motocross Championship Series Tour.

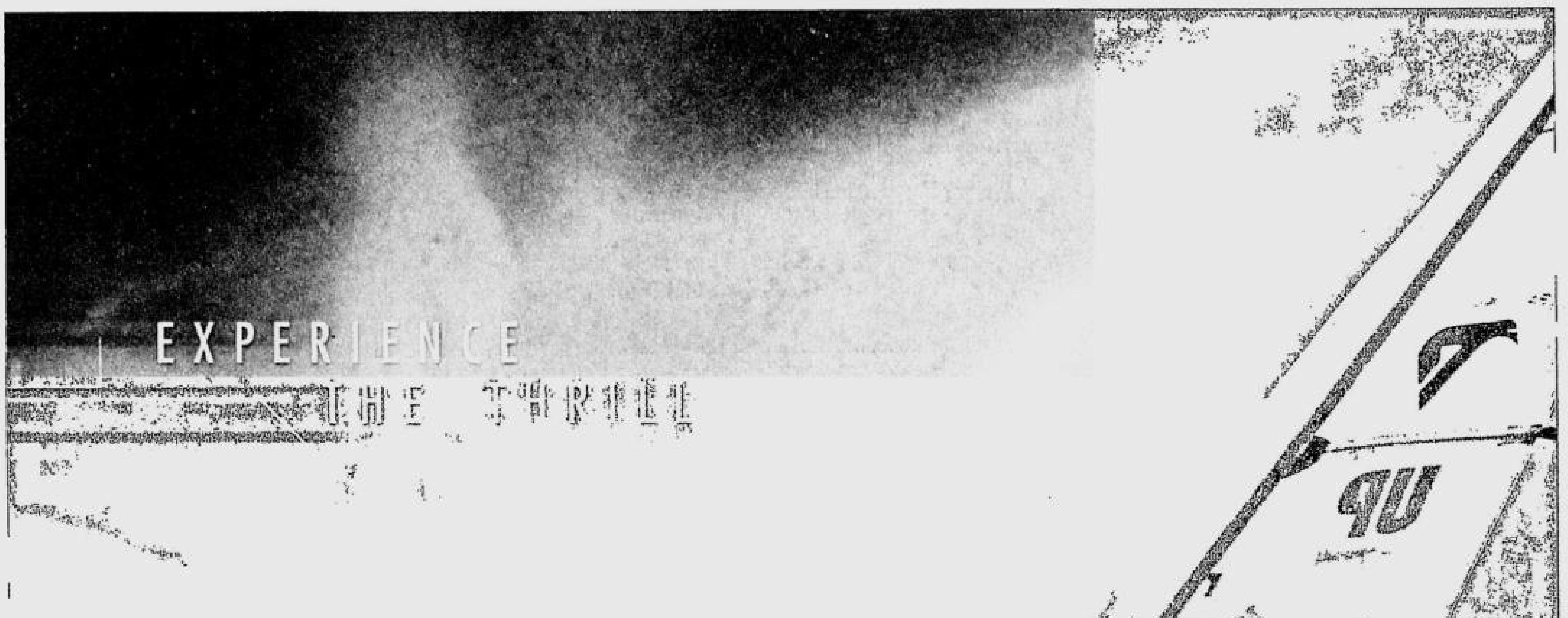
Also joining the event are Guam Executive class champion rider Stan Yasuhiro as well as Philippine junior champions Patrick and Jacob Orbe.

Taguig City Mayor Freddie Tinga will lead the opening ceremonies at 11 a.m.

Registration and practice sessions will be held on Jan. 28. Late registrants will be accepted until 9 a.m. on Sunday. For info, call 0917-8992363.

Ang Liga Saturday

THE CANDIDATES squad tries to fortify its grip of second place when it tackles College of St. Benilde when play resumes in the PFF-Ang Liga Pilipina football tournament tomorrow at the Cuenca field in Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Composed of national pool members, the Candidates guns for its eighth win in nine outings against the CSB (2-7) booters at 4 p.m. in the event organized by the Philippine National Women's Football Association. Sphere, which whipped Nomads, 20-0, on Jan. 18, aims for its seventh victory in 10 matches against Nomads (3-5) at 2 p.m.



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Sharapova, Williams set showdown

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—UNSEEDED AND RANKED No. 81, Serena Williams made it back to a Grand Slam final with a 7-6 (5), 6-4 win over Nicole Vaidisova at the Australian Open.

She will face top-seeded Maria Sharapova in the final, the 19-year-old Russian advancing, 6-4, 6-2, later Thursday over No. 4 Kim Clijsters in the second semifinal.

Williams and Sharapova are 2-2 in head-to-heads—Williams winning their last encounter after saving match points in the semifinals here two years ago before going on to win the title.

Williams, a seven-time Grand Slam singles champ, weathered Vaidisova's powerful forehands and gave back plenty of her own, sometimes surprising the 17-year-old Czech player with her speed around the court and the pace of her ball.

After leading 5-1 in the second, she needed six match points before sealing it with an overhead.

"Yahooo!" she said, laughing and celebrating the win.

"She played some incredible points on match point," Williams said. "She just got relaxed. It reminded me a bit of myself. I just tried to stay focused and tried to stay calm—it was just great."

Sharapova overcame an early service break to dominate Clijsters, who was only able to convert two of her 12 break-point chances despite the Russian making eight double-faults and 33 unforced errors.

"I saw those double faults come in at the wrong times. But somehow I managed to fight through and make the first serve when I had to," Sharapova said. "That was the key and is also going to be the key in the final.

Sharapova was at her best under pressure, fending off seven break points in the second set. She rallied from 0-40 in the first game with a pair of aces and three forehand winners.

Sharapova, the US Open champion, will be making her first appearance in an Australian Open final after two losses in the semifinals.

She said she was looking forward to a rematch with Williams.

"I'm excited for that. She came into this tournament without any expectations, and she is playing great tennis," Sharapova said. "To be in the final of a Grand Slam, that takes a lot of hard work. She's won many of these titles—I have a lot to catch up."

Clijsters, who will retire at the end of the season and plans to start a family, has lost four semifinals here and the 2004 final.

She gave Sharapova match point with a double-fault, and Sharapova clinched it with a forehand winner down the line.

Williams has won two of her seven majors at Melbourne Park and is one win away from her most improbable title.

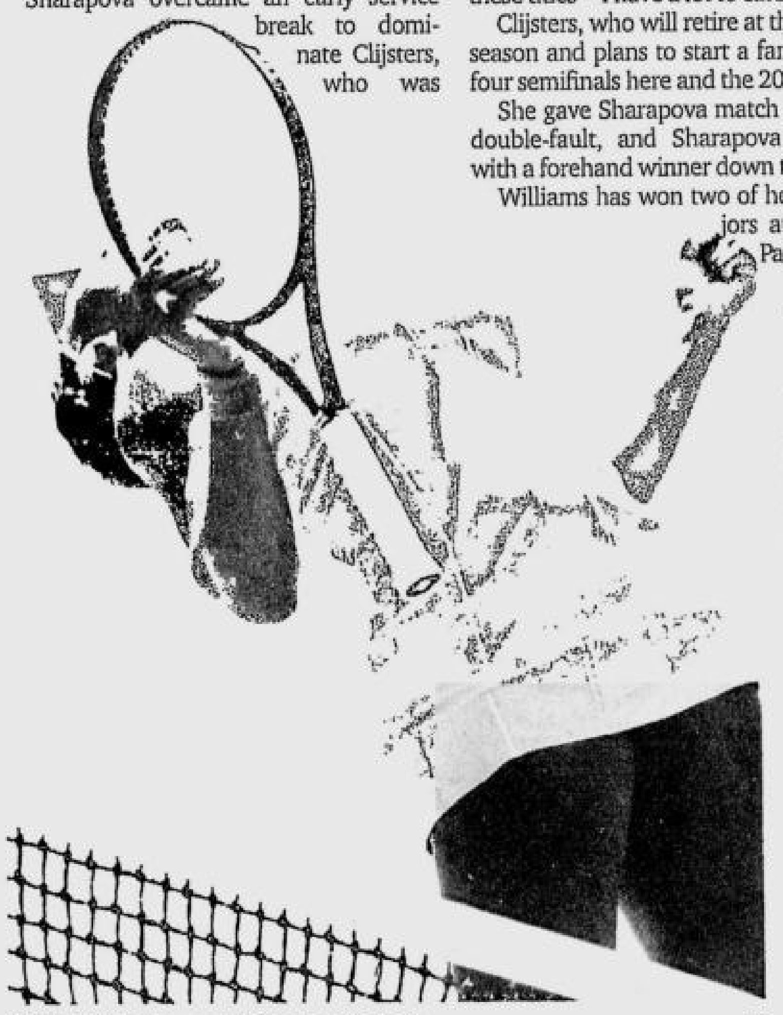
In between her win here in 2005 and her run to this year's final, Williams had not beaten a top 10 player and dropped out of the top 100 at one point last year.

By reaching the final, she is expected to surge back into the top 20.

Williams broke Vaidisova twice in the second set but the No. 10 seed rallied and won four straight games, saving four match points after being down 0-40 to hold the ninth game.

"I almost did a gagarooney there," said Williams, explaining: "Basically, you know gagging." *AP*

MARIA Sharapova finds a way to get past her service woes to crash Kim Clijsters' farewell party. REUTERS



WILLIAMS: I almost did a gagarooney. AP

Federer Express destroys A-Rod

MELBOURNE—WORLD NO. 1 Roger Federer stormed into a record-equaling seventh successive Grand Slam final with a straight sets humiliation of American rival Andy Roddick at the Australian Open Thursday.

Federer was in a different class as he raced into his third Australian final in four years with a 6-4, 6-0, 6-2 romp in just one hour and 23 minutes.

It was Roddick's heaviest defeat in five Grand Slam matches with Federer, who now faces either Chilean 10th seed Fernando Gonzalez or German 12th seed Tommy Haas in Sunday's final.

Gonzalez and Haas play their semifinal on Friday.

Federer equaled the all-time record for consecutive Grand Slam final appearances of seven, held since 1934 by Australian Jack Crawford.

"Winning matches is the best thing, but to break records that's something you never dream of, it's fantastic and I hope I can keep it up, I'm playing so well at the moment, I might as well take them along the way," Federer said. "I had one of these days where everything worked and I was unbeatable.

"It's just unreal. I'm shocked at it myself. The tournament's not even over yet, so let's not get carried away, let me try to do it one more time and then let's get all excited."

It stretched Federer's unbeaten run of matches to 35 and increased his record against Roddick to 13-1.

The American, who spoke of his gap closing with Federer before the match, was upstaged by the precision strokes of the incomparable Swiss.

Federer has reached the Australian final without dropping a set in his six matches with American Michael Chang the last man to do this in 1996.

The phenomenal Federer has only lost two of 13 Grand Slam semifinals he has played in—the 2005 Australian semifinal to Marat Safin and at Roland Garros the same year.

Federer broke Roddick's serve in the first set but the American broke back in the fourth and looked good until the ninth game when his form suddenly deserted him.

The Swiss ace broke for the second time winning a furious rally at net and then served out for the opening set in 33 minutes.

It got decidedly worse for Roddick in the second set, losing every service game as Federer raced through to love in just 22 minutes.

Roddick's new strategy to come into the net more had him in two minds as Federer passed him with beautiful backhand winners.

So exasperated was Roddick after his third service break in the set that he flung his racket off the court towards a photographer.

The rot had truly set in and Roddick again dropped his opening service in the third set as Federer relentlessly powered on and won his 11th game in succession when he led 2-0. *AFP*

Manning plays coy about finger injury

INDIANAPOLIS—INDIANAPOLIS Colts quarterback Peyton Manning thumbed his way through questions about his injured throwing hand on Wednesday.

"I attended the Bill Belichick school of discussing injuries, so there's my answer," Manning said, drawing laughter.

Belichick, New England's coach, is known for keeping the status of injured players secret, and Manning took advantage of a rare opportunity to do his own impersonation of the three-time Super Bowl winner by giving no update on his right thumb.

Manning, a two-time MVP, kept both of his hands in his pockets as he walked into a news conference three days after hurting it in the AFC championship game.

The injury is a rare nick for the league's best-known ironman outside of Green Bay. In nine pro seasons, Manning has started all 156 career games including playoffs, a streak that ranks second among NFL quarterbacks behind only Brett Favre of the Packers.

But with two weeks between his last victory and a Super Bowl date against the Chicago Bears, Manning's right thumb has suddenly become big news. He was injured against New England.

X-rays were negative on Monday, and he practiced on Wednesday. *AP*

Caguioa. . .

From page A21

two-game spectacle with the first tiff set in Pudong, China Sunday and the next match slated the following day in Inchon, Korea.

"That's a big honor for the PBA," said PBA technical head Perry Martinez. "The message is that the other leagues acknowledge the job and competence of the PBA referees."

Ting leaves for Pudong Jan. 27.

The PBA received the invitation from KBL official Hoon Sang Lee, in-charge for technical matters of the annual event.

"To be invited in such prestigious undertaking by the KBL and the CBA is really a great honor," said Martinez. *Francis Ochoa*

New year for Tiger, with some carryover

SAN DIEGO—AS MANY TIMES AS TIGER Woods has played and won at Torrey Pines, he has never figured out the patchwork shades of blue in the Pacific Ocean below the cliffside course. Looking out from the fourth green on Wednesday, his New Zealand caddie told him the darker the shade, the colder the water.

It was a fitting start to his 2007 season, staring at segments that represent old and new, but blending.

The Buick Invitational is his first tournament of the season, but Woods carries over from last year a US PGA Tour winning streak that dates to July. He is going for his seventh in a row on the tour, and odds are in his favor as the two-time defending champion.

"It is meaningful because it's not easy to do," Woods said, and he should know because he won six straight US PGA Tour events at the end of 1999 and beginning of 2000, the second-longest streak behind Byron Nelson's 11 in a row in 1945.

But he also doesn't consider it a real streak.

That ended at five in October when he lost in the first round of the HSBC World Match Play Championship in England. Throw out match play, and Woods was runner-up in consecutive weeks in Asia.

"It's a PGA Tour streak," Woods said. "It's not really a win streak because obviously, I lost at Match Play, I lost at the Ryder Cup, I finished second in China, I finished second in Japan. I was on a losing streak for a bit."

Also in transition are his emotions.

Gone is the dread Woods felt at Torrey Pines last year when he knew his father had only a short time to live, replaced by the excitement of his wife being pregnant with their first child, due sometime in July.

"I'm looking forward to the year and what's going to transpire," Woods said. "Last year, I was not looking forward to the year and what was going to transpire. One is just praying and hoping, and the other is pure excitement and enjoyment. So it's two totally opposite ends."

He was lively during his pro-am, talking about the changes to Torrey Pines for the US Open next year, his dinner on Tuesday with San Diego Chargers running back LaDainian Tomlinson, and his wife's plans to finish out her spring semester at university.

The first step in his new year starts on Thursday against a 156-man field that is not as strong as recent years, but looks stacked at the top with Woods, Phil Mickelson and Vijay Singh.

And while there is much talk about a streak, that tends to shift some attention to Mickelson.

Woods won the final four US PGA events in 1999 then won the first two events of 2000 to raise remote possibilities that Nelson's untouchable record might be within reach.

The next stop was Torrey Pines.

"He didn't get it, did he?" Mickelson said, trying to fool his audience with a quizzical look. Lefty knows better, having pulled away over the final six holes to end Woods' streak at six. *AP*

WOODS: A lot to look forward to. AP

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Gov't to liberalize forex restrictions

To address impact of excessive inflows, strengthening peso

By Doris C. Dumlao

IN SHARP CONTRAST TO THAILAND'S RECENT move to curb capital inflows, the Philippines is set to liberalize existing restrictions on capital outflows as a way to hedge against the strong influx of foreign money while keeping its monetary policy steady for now.

During its regular monthly meeting yesterday, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' policy-making Monetary Board maintained its overnight rates for the 15th straight month at 7.5 percent for overnight borrowing and 9.75 percent for overnight lending and kept the tiering system that was revived since November.

Tiering, effectively a monetary easing, is a system wherein the BSP pays a lower rate on overnight funds in excess of certain threshold levels to encourage banks to lend out instead of parking all their funds with the monetary authority.

Since the BSP introduced the tiering system, some analysts said monetary policy had become too accommodating given possible price pressures from rising liquidity caused by heavy foreign exchange inflows from foreign portfolio investments and remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

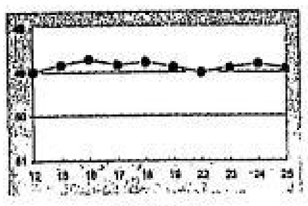
But BSP sources said a package of measures to liberalize the capital accounts, focusing on the outflow side, was being prepared and would soon be presented for approval by the Monetary Board.

"We will be responding to capital flows in due time," one BSP source said. "We have to do something about the expected heavy inflows."

The source declined to say what measures were being drawn up, but other officials said the package would include the proposed changes to the overbought posi-

GOV'T/ B3

INDICATORS



JANUARY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P48.95 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 25, 2007

Stocks up 0.94%

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 0.94 percent higher amid hopes that the central bank would trim its policy rates, dealers said.

Higher import growth in November also spurred buying interest because this signaled continuing brisk exports in the coming months, they said.

The composite index added 30.44 points to 3,275.19. It moved between

STOCKS/ B2

IN THIS ISSUE
Petron plans to export to China, Vietnam /B2
Gov't raises non-tax revenue target to P115B /B3

Imports grew 13.4% to $4.51B in November

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S IMPORTS GREW 13.4 percent to $4.51 billion in November from a year ago, in what economists said was a preparation by businesses to meet an expected increase in consumer demand in the early months of 2007.

Merchandise imports in November brought the January-to-November imports figure to $47.36 billion, up 9.6 percent from a year ago.

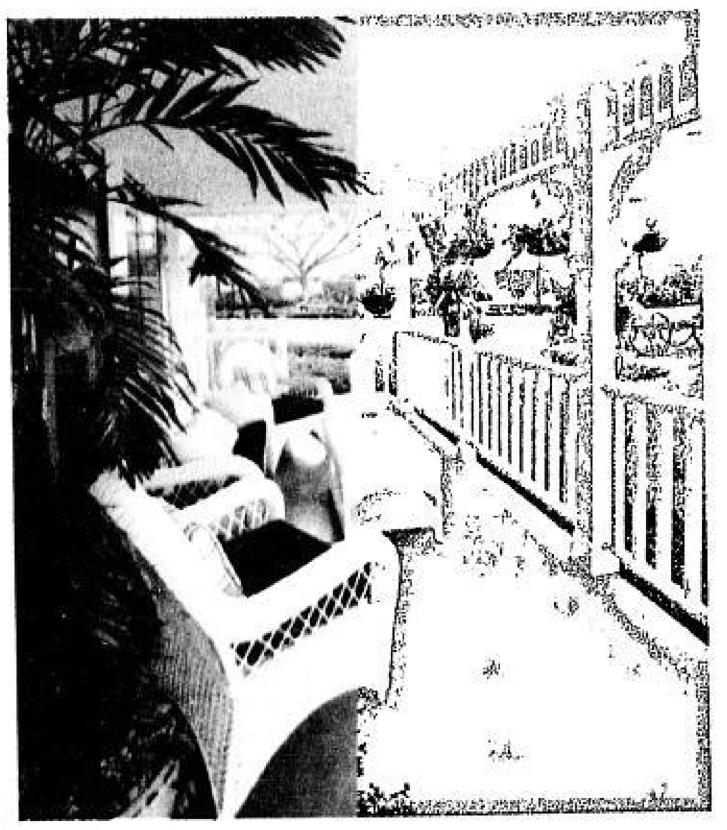
Balance of trade in goods in the 11-month period hit a deficit of $4.02 billion, 30-percent lower than the previous year's $5.78 billion.

The trade balance is the difference between revenues from exports and expenses for imports.

But in the case of the Philippines, economic officials said an increase in imports meant that businesses, including exporters, were optimistic that de-

IMPORTS/ B2

Brittany



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PetroEnergy group to spend $22.5M for drilling project

Resource potential placed at 158M barrels of oil

By Abigail L. Ho

A GROUP COMPOSED OF LOCAL and foreign firms will invest $22.5 million to drill a well within the Kamia Prospect, formerly Cherry Prospect, in offshore Mindoro.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, listed consortium member PetroEnergy Resources Corp. said the proposed well, or Kamia 1, would be drilled some time in March or April to a depth of 1,500 meters in around 160 meters of water.

The prospect has an estimated resource potential of 158 million barrels of oil, PetroEnergy chief information officer Arturo Maulion said.

The cost of the drilling, he said, would be shouldered entirely by majority stakeholder Petronas of Malaysia.

The other consortium members are PetroEnergy, PNOC Exploration Corp. and Basic Petroleum Inc.

Petronas holds a majority stake in Service Contract 47 at 80 percent. PNOC-EC has 19.4 percent; PetroEnergy, 0.4 percent, and Basic Petroleum , 0.2 percent.

The Department of Energy last month launched the Philippine Energy Contracting Round 2006 (PECR), a venue for interested investors to bid for the right to explore and develop nine petroleum blocks, 14 coal prospects and three geothermal sites located all over the country.

For petroleum exploration, the DOE has identified nine areas spanning 71,357.3 square kilometers for development, including Cagayan, Central Luzon, two blocks in Mindoro-Cuyo, three blocks in East Palawan, Visayan Basin and Agusan-Davao.

In an earlier interview, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said at least one investor had expressed interest to bid for each of the nine oil and gas areas that were placed on the auction block.

In 2005, only four oil and gas areas were offered to prospective investors, two of which had yet to be formally awarded as these were still awaiting Malacañang nod.

For coal, the DOE is offering 14 sites with a total resource potential of 421 million metric tons (MT) for exploration, development and production.

Energy Undersecretary Guillermo Balce said in an earlier interview that each site would be composed of three blocks, with each block spanning 1,000 hectares.

These sites are located in Quezon, Negros Occidental, Cebu, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur, Davao Oriental and Zamboanga Sibugay.

Petron plans to export to China, Vietnam

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS OF its entry into the Cambodian market, industry leader Petron Corp. is now eyeing the Chinese and Vietnamese markets for its lubricants and other products.

Petron president Khalid Al-Faddagh said the company remained bullish about the export market, particularly as this had been a big factor in boosting the oil firm's bottom line during the past several quarters.

He said Petron was currently considering opportunities in Vietnam, as well as monitoring the potential of the Chinese market.

"But it all has to be economic. For now, we monitor the shipments to Cambodia for our lubricants. That's our first overseas market for lubricants," he said.

Petron is banking on a partnership with fuel additives firm Innospec Inc. to further boost its presence in regional markets.

Under an agreement with Innospec, Petron will be constructing and operating a $2.5-million blending plant within the Subic Bay Freeport by the end of the year.

The company said that under the 10-year contract, the Subic blending facility would serve the fuel additives requirements of Innospec's customers in the Asia-Pacific region, including Petron.

The deal likewise guaranteed that Petron would be Innospec's exclusive toll blender in the region, the oil firm added. *Abigail L. Ho*

ASIA
Forbes

PLDT IN FORBES ASIA'S FAB 50

Philippine Long Distance Telephon Co. president and CEO Napoleon L. Nazareno (right) received for the phone giant its award as one of Forbes Asia magazine's "Fabulous 50" companies, the only Philippine company to make it to the selection. Forbes Asia chooses the best out of Asia Pacific's about 500 publicly traded companies with revenue or market capitalization of at least $5 billion. In 2006, Forbes Asia pegged PLDT's sales at $2.37 billion and market value at $6.76 billion. With Nazareno are some of the other awardees who attended the recent awarding ceremony in Hong Kong.

GeoGrace expands mine base

By Daxim L. Lucas

MINING FIRM GEOGRACE RESOURCES Philippines Inc. has signed yet another agreement to expand its nickel mining base in Zambales, days after sealing a similar mining rights deal.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange, GeoGrace said it had entered into a memorandum of agreement with Saprolite Mining Inc. to acquire the latter's rights over a 5,503-hectare nickel mining concession.

"Saprolite's mining tenements are located in the towns of Cabangan, San Felipe and San Narciso," the company said. "It's chromite-nickel deposits are situated within the Zambales Ophiolite Complex at the eastern central segment of the province."

Earlier, GeoGrace inked an agreement with Garnierite Mining Inc. to acquire 100 percent of its mining rights that covers 12,957 of nickel property in the towns of Cabangan and Botolan in Zambales.

GeoGrace is listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange and was formerly known as Global Equities Inc.

The deal brings GeoGrace's acquisition of nickel mining concessions to 18,466 hectares in the last few days.

Nickel is the main element used in producing stainless steel and is used mainly for industrial concerns.

The value of nickel has risen sharply in recent years due to strong demand from countries like China and India.

Subject to the completion of the due diligence and the valuation of the Zambales mining right, the parties have the option to enter into a share-for-property swap agreement which will call for the issuance of new GeoGrace shares in favor of Saprolite in exchange for the mining rights.

The parties can also opt for a share-for-share swap deal where GeoGrace will issue new shares to the shareholders of Saprolite in exchange for 100 percent of the firm's total outstanding capital stock.

Similar provisions cover GeoGrace's earlier deal with Garnierite Mining.

GeoGrace recently formed a joint venture with Australia's Rusina Mining N.L. to develop mining projects in the Philippines through a similar deal.

GeoGrace said the partnership with Australian Stock Exchange-listed Rusina Mining involves a share swap deal between the two companies.

It also includes the purchase by GeoGrace of up to 100 percent of the total shares of Fil-Asia Strategic Investment Holdings Corp. (Fil-Asia Holdings).

In exchange, GeoGrace will pay the subscription by way of cash, shares or mining claims that may include areas in Surigao, Bukidnon and Zambales provinces.

Filinvest prices $203-M offer at ₱1.60 a share

FILINVEST LAND INC. AND FILINVEST ALABang Inc. have priced their FLI common shares offering worth $203 million at P1.60 a share.

Out of the 5.4 billion common shares, 3.7 billion will come from FLI. This is expected to raise gross primary proceeds amounting to P5.92 billion or $121 million.

FAI has offered 1.7 billion existing FLI shares for sale also at P1.60 each.

FAI has granted UBS AG, in its role as stabilizing agent, an option to purchase up to 809.85 million additional shares at the offer price, to cover allotments.

The offer price represents a 5.8-percent discount of the volume weighted average price of FLI in the Philippine Stock Exchange during the 10 trading days ending Jan. 19, 2007, at P1.69.

Some 95 percent of the total offering was allocated to international investors, and 5 percent to PSE brokers.

The transaction is expected to close and the new shares are expected to be listed on the PSE on Feb. 6.

FLI's portion of the net proceeds of the offering will be used to finance its development projects in 2007. FLI has budgeted P5 billion in capital expenditures for this year, P3.7 billion of which will go to residential development and P1.3 billion will be spent for office development.

Imports grew 13.4% . . .

From page B1

mand for their products would increase in the months ahead since a significant portion of the country's imports are raw materials for finished export items.

"It is a good sign when imports of raw materials and intermediate goods are rising. It shows an increase in production in 2007," said Dennis Arroyo, director for policy and planning at the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

The National Statistics Office reported that electronics was still the biggest import for November, accounting for $2.18 billion, up 8.4 percent year-on-year. Electronics imports are composed of raw materials for electronic goods, bulk of which are for export.

Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials were the second-biggest import for November, accounting for $783.6 million of the total import bill.

Other top imports for November were transport equipment, $216.55 million; industrial machinery and equipment, $150.08 million; textile, yarn and related materials, $79.79 million; plastics, $75.74 million; metalliferous and metal scraps, $73.23 million; iron and steel, $69.98 million; chemicals, $69.9 million; and telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery, $65.85 million.

The United States remained the biggest source of imports at $681.63 million of the total import bill for November. Japan followed with $607.95 million.

Other sources of imports for November were Taiwan, Singapore, China, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates.

Stocks . . .

From page B1

3,254.53 and 3,292.84.

The broader all-shares index was up 17.80 points at 2,016.05.

Gainers beat losers 76 to 34, while 65 stocks ended unchanged.

Volume was 2.3 billion shares worth P4.8 billion.

Dealers said strong fund inflows chased select blue chips led by market heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and SM Investments Corp.

"There's too much money chasing too few index issues at the moment. Foreign investors are evidently very bullish about the Philippines, and their interest extends to issues outside of the main index," said James Lago of Westlink Global Equities Inc.

AFP

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Jan. 25, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.4	7.4	7.2	7.4	81,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	47.5	49	47	49	2,683,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	72	72	71	71.5	2,708,300
China Banking Corp.	690	695	690	690	15,310
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	26	26	26	26	500
Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.51	0.53	0.5	0.51	14,350,000
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	85	86	85	85.5	190,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	60	60.5	59.5	60	6,123,400
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	43	49	43	49	1,400
Philippine National Bank	48	49	48	48	58,300
Phil. Savings Bank	49	49.5	49	49.5	3,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	38	38.5	36.5	37	569,400
Security Bank Corp.	75	75.5	75	75	464,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	61	61	60	60	25,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.67	0.67	270,000
Citisecоnline.Com Inc.	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	155,000
First Abacus Financial	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1630	1640	1630	1635	430
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	313,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	360	380	360	380	3,850
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2030	2055	2030	2055	2,840
Ivantage Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.62	1.64	7,634,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
PNOC Energy Dev. Corp.	4.9	5	4.85	4.9	42,752,000
First Gen Corp.	55	55	54.5	54.5	700,900
First Phil Hldgs Corp	71	73.5	70.5	72.5	1,880,400
Manila Electric Co. A	70	73	70	71.5	427,000
Manila Electric Co. B	72.5	73.5	71.5	72.5	1,417,000
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.1	9.2	9	9	3,882,000
Petron Corp.	4.15	4.2	4.1	4.1	10,335,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.22	1.24	1.2	1.2	588,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	20.75	20.75	20.5	20.5	105,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	44	44	43.5	44	466,300
RFM Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.3	1.36	587,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	154,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.38	700,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63	63.5	63	63	25,400
San Miguel Corp. B	75.5	75.5	75	75	1,237,200
Alliance Tuna Int'l, Inc.	2.08	2.1	2.06	2.08	947,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19	18.75	19	3,393,300
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.26	1.34	1.26	1.3	58,033,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	4.2	4.55	4.2	4.35	5,509,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.25	504,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.5	7,824,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	6	6	6	6	13,000
Republic Cement Corp.	5.3	5.6	5.3	5.4	1,103,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.85	5.1	4.85	5	3,805,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.61	0.65	0.61	0.65	180,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.8	0.8	60,130,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.215	0.24	0.215	0.235	35,580,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	155,000,000
Ayala Corp.	630	630	620	625	279,660
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	200,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	9.3	9.4	8.8	8.9	8,485,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.0775	0.08	0.075	0.08	59,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.95	3.1	2.95	3.1	1,728,000
APC Group Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.36	0.37	5,270,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.012	117,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.22	1.28	1.18	1.26	41,987,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3.8	3.85	3.7	3.75	899,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.28	1.32	1.28	1.32	242,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.5	10	10.5	102,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.65	2.75	2.65	2.7	78,098,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.1	1,382,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.85	5,457,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	830,000
House of Investments Inc.	2.55	2.9	2.5	2.7	3,454,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	1,958,900
Keppel Holdings	1.32	1.8	1.32	1.8	124,000
Medco Holdings	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	400,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.38	0.39	0.36	0.36	450,000
Magnum Holdings, Inc	5.2	5.4	5.1	5.2	2,442,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	2.02	2.02	1.94	1.94	2,577,000
Pacifica	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	33,100,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.2	700,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	580,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.16	2,520,000
SM Investments Corp.	375	402.5	375	390	1,118,530
South China Resources Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	2,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.74	1.76	1.74	1.74	272,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.245	0.26	0.23	0.26	20,610,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.145	1,890,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	17	17.25	16.75	16.75	9,756,800
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	650,000
Belle Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.2	1.2	2,264,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.92	2.02	1.9	1.9	9,114,000
Cityland Development Corp	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.7	201,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	1,140,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.55	3.5	3.5	285,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.7	1.96	1.7	1.88	2,453,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B -	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	40,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	650,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.73	0.73	0.71	0.71	68,680,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.66	1.66	1.64	1.66	162,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0675	0.0675	0.0625	0.0675	4,100,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.18	780,000
Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	130,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	10,000
Interport Res.	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	6,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	56,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.51	3,750,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.81	0.81	1,430,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.031	0.034	0.029	0.029	11,800,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.032	0.036	0.027	0.029	40,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.5	2.65	2.48	2.48	66,018,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	4.95	5	4.95	4.95	176,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	1,540,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.17	0.185	0.17	0.185	2,700,000
Polar Property Holdings	2	2	2	2	12,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	16	16.5	16	16.25	12,912,600
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.67	0.69	0.66	0.67	11,010,000
SM Development Corp.	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4	3,755,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12.25	5,068,100
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.59	0.61	0.57	0.61	90,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	21	21.25	21	21.25	255,600
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.94	1.96	10,987,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1290	1295	1285	1295	89,740
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.6	6.6	3,814,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2745	2820	2745	2795	158,550
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	7,770,000
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	56,500,000
Ionics Inc.	2.65	2.75	2.6	2.7	3,385,000
IPVG Corp.	3.8	3.85	3.7	3.7	477,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0575	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	9,500,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.06	0.06	0.0575	0.06	5,600,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	28,000
Transpacific Broadband	2.36	2.44	2.34	2.34	1,378,000
Philweb Corp.	0.034	0.035	0.034	0.034	330,200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.15	4.2	4.15	4.2	898,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.58	1.64	1.58	1.64	67,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	24	24.25	23.5	24.25	2,787,500
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	170,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	25,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.04	2.08	2.04	2.08	384,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.55	4	3.55	3.8	57,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	1,060,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.61	0.62	0.61	0.62	310,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	860	860	860	860	10
Ipeople Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.15	3.15	43,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	230,000
Paxys Inc.	22.5	24.5	22.5	23.5	1,435,800
Philippine Seven Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	2,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	236,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	233,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	110,600,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9	9.1	8.9	8.9	1,199,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.3	10,000
Benguet Corp. B	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	300
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.55	2.7	2.55	2.7	2,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	27,510,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	1,520,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.026	150,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.028	114,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	38,100,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4	4	3.95	3.95	4,663,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	15	15	14.75	15	244,900
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.69	0.72	0.69	0.7	1,480,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.56	1.58	1.5	1.52	4,023,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	11,900,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	111,100,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	101,100,000
The Philodrill Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	86,200,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.25	160,900

CURRENCIES

January 25, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.771605	1.000000	48.8480
Japan	Yen	0.006370	0.008256	0.4033
United Kingdom	Pound	1.518904	1.968500	96.1573
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098882	0.128151	6.2599
Switzerland	Franc	0.617976	0.800897	39.1222
Canada	Dollar	0.654901	0.848752	41.4598
Singapore	Dollar	0.502609	0.651381	31.8187
Australia	Dollar	0.603005	0.781494	38.1744
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.046860	2.652731	129.5806
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.205712	0.266603	13.0230
Brunei	Dollar	0.500977	0.649266	31.7153
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021908	0.028393	1.3869
Uae	Dirham	0.210098	0.272287	13.3007
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.296000	63.3070
Korea	Won	0.000825	0.001069	0.0522
China	Yuan**	0.099274	0.128659	6.2847
Argentina	Peso	0.249307	0.323102	15.7829
Brazil	Real	0.362681	0.470035	22.9603
Denmark	Kroner	0.134139	0.173844	8.4919
India	Rupee	0.017477	0.022650	1.1064
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220490	0.285755	13.9586
Mexico	New Peso	0.070624	0.091529	4.4710
New Zealand	Dollar	0.537030	0.695991	33.9978
South Africa	Rand	0.108371	0.140449	6.8607
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023524	0.030487	1.4892

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time—Jan. 24, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen

** Asian time closing rate as of Jan. 24, 2007

Gov't raises non-tax revenue target to P115B

BOC, BIR tax collection goals for '07 lowered

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS RAISED its non-tax revenue goal this year by P25 billion to P115.6 billion.

According to the Department of Finance, this will compensate for the adverse impact on tax collection of the declining interest rate and slowdown in inflation.

It also said the government would continue its deficit reduction program for this year by maximizing the use of its resources.

Non-tax revenues are composed largely of proceeds from privatization, fees and charges collected by government agencies out of the delivery of services, and income generated by the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr). BTr income includes dividends of the national government from its shares in state-owned firms and investments in foreign-denominated securities.

The government has set a target of limiting its budget deficit this year to only P63 billion, lower than the P125-billion ceiling set for 2006.

This year's target was anchored on the assumption that the Bureau of Internal Revenue would collect P784.1 billion in taxes and the Bureau of Customs would turn in P235.1 billion worth of import-duty collection to state coffers.

But the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC), which sets macroeconomic targets, lowered the revenue collection goals of the BIR and the BOC.

The downward revision was based on a study that showed the potential foregone tax revenues arising from macroeconomic developments, including the fall in interest rates and slowdown in inflation rate.

A slower-than-expected inflation means prices would be lower than anticipated. This results in the lower collection of value-added tax by the BIR. The drop in interest rate reduces income generated from bank deposits, which therefore trims income tax collection.

The DBCC also said the strengthening of the peso would drag down the collection of import duties by the BOC.

A finance official said that while appreciation of the peso, decline in interest rates and slowdown in inflation have positive effects on the economy, these also adversely affect the government's tax and duty collection performance.

"The BIR and the BOC are victims of the positive macroeconomic developments," the official said.

The BIR's revenue collection target was revised to only P765.9 billion, while that of the BOC was reduced to P228.2 billion.

New water sources eyed

MANILA WATER CO. HAS identified two catch basins as alternative interim sources of potable water to meet the increasing demand for water in the east zone of Metropolitan Manila. These can also serve as backup in case of any breakdown in existing facilities.

MWC, in collaboration with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), is looking into the development of the Laiban Water System which will harness the Kanan and Kaliwa Rivers in Tanay, Rizal and the Rodriguez Water System which will involve the rehabilitation of the Wawa Dam. Wawa Dam was Metro Manila's source of water in the 1960s prior to the completion of the Angat Water Supply Optimization Project in the 1980s.

Under the plan, the new water sources will be developed jointly by the two MWSS concessionaires to ensure the sustainability of supply to Metro Manila. Currently, Angat Dam is the sole major source of raw water, harnessing water from the Angat River in Bulacan. Any serious damage to the facilities of Angat Dam brought about by natural occurrences can jeopardize water supply to Metro Manila.

Making technology profitable: Jatropha

COMMENTARY

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

THE ALYANSA AGRIKULTURA, composed of 42 federations and organizations covering all major agriculture and fishery sectors, has identified profitable technology as its main thrust for 2007.

Among the key technologies the Alyansa is advocating this year—aside from initiatives such as the System of Rice Intensification (SRI), organic farming, and sustainable community managed fishery systems—is jatropha cultivation. Omie Royandoyan, Alyansa president and Centro Saka executive director, is targeting the completion of 100,000 hectares of intercropped newly planted jatropha between coconut trees in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Royandoyan has already made arrangements for 15,000 hectares of land of the Coconut Farmers of Southern Leyte (Cofasl) led by Emi Laviña and Rudy Junio in Hinondayon, Southern Leyte; 20,000 hectares, Tandaya Foundation and Caritas Foundation led by Luisito Uy and Father Ceasar Aculan, respectively, in Calbayog and Catbalogan, Samar; 5,000 hectares, Toril Coconut Farmers Organization led by Francisco Pepito in Toril, Davao, and 2,000 hectares, Surigao del Sur Federation of Agricultural Cooperative (Sufac) led by Ayro Medrano in Tago, Surigao del Sur.

Why Jatropha?

Jatropha cultivation was considered an Alyansa Agrikultura priority because of its high positive impact on millions of poor farmers. In the coconut sector alone, this means 3.7 million coconut farmers and farm workers.

Aside from looking at alternative uses of coconut and taking advantage of the recent strong demand for virgin coconut oil, the best way for a poor coconut farmer to improve his life is inter-cropping crops such as cacao and coffee.

But jatropha requires no fertilizer and, therefore, practically no investment. It is easy to grow, even on barren land. Jatropha also has a big market demand, because it is a raw material source for biofuel.

As for potential income, Royandoyan says: "In one hectare, 25,000 plants yielding 1 kilogram of jatropha nuts each can be grown. At the prevailing P10 per nut, this would be P25,000.00 a hectare. But in some places where the nuts sell at double this price, it is P50,000.00 a hectare!"

Small: Beautiful but dead

However, the jatropha cultivation technology may end up in losses rather than profits if a business systems methodology is not used.

As far back as 1981, we did a survey which showed that potentially effective technologies used by farmers in a "small but beautiful" approach ended up in massive losses. This was because each individual farmer myopically acted on his or her own, without looking at the complete seed to shelf agri-business system using economies of scale.

The correct method, later identified as the "anchor approach," proposed that an anchor group with an anchor project is needed to help manage the production and marketing of several farmers producing the same product, using economies of scale.

Just imagine several farmers using jatropha cultivation technology effectively, but not being able to sell the nuts profitably because there is no processing plant in the area to absorb the nuts. Or these same farmers finding a very strong demand for these nuts, but not having the seeds to grow the jatropha to fill this demand.

Anchor applied to jatropha

The first necessity is to find the correct economies of scale production level to make a jatropha business globally competitive and profitable. In my literature search of the jatropha program in India, which has been very successful, the optimal economic scale of one jatropha cluster is 2,000 hectares. This is what it would take to justify the setting up of an anchor processing plant that would provide the market for the jatropha nuts.

In addition, the anchor group should also set up an anchor nursery to provide the farmers with the appropriate seeds and cultivation technology to ensure the quality and consistency of the nuts delivered to the plant.

This approach is absolutely necessary to make the jatropha technology profitable.

Centro Saka is helping organize the 2,000-hectare modules with farmer cooperatives. The Coconut Industry and Investment Fund (CIIF) led by Danilo Coronacion is providing the funds to set up the processing plants and the nurseries, as well as looking for competent business managers for the anchor groups. Though jatropha can be planted in places other than coconut lands, the business infrastructure in using the anchor approach is already in place with Centro Saka and the CIIF playing their respective critical roles. For more information on this, please text or call Royandoyan at 0917-820-5026.

(The author is Agriwatch chair; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary of agriculture and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax (02) 8522112)

For RP, '07 is turning into a make or break year

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FOR THE PHILIPPINES, 2007 IS turning into a make-or-break year, according to the World Bank's director for the Philippines.

If the country hopes to become part of the rapid economic growth in East Asia, then the government will do well to continue and sustain infrastructure-related reforms, WB director Joachim von Amsberg said.

Speaking before members of the Makati Busines Club, Joachim von Amsberg said infrastructure must be the focus, even citing it as key to greater inflow of investments that will drive economic growth.

"This window of opportunity created by fiscal reforms (may be maximized through) the implementation—one step at a time—of good policies that are already in place, and which do not have structural obstacles," von Amsberg said.

He said such reform would include continuing efforts in the power sector, construction of roads and waterworks projects, any one of which hopefully could be a showcase of public-private sector partnership.

"Deregulation must be adopted when competition is possible and regulation may be done, so long as there are clear rules that would be implemented consistently," he stressed.

Also, Von Amsberg again cautioned the government from becoming too complacent with the gains it had achieved from current reforms. He said this would only muddle the government's future effort, derailing it from its goal of delivering the country to a higher level of development.

He had said that the country's potential for rapid development rested on a booming neighborhood, an educated, English-speaking people, its rich natural resources, and the dynamic sectors of electronics, business services and overseas workers, who bring in foreign exchange.

Von Amsberg suggested a policy agenda aimed at addressing the situation that, for one, covers macroeconomic fiscal stability by strengthening the rule of law and credibility of contracts.

He said further progress with privatization needed to be pushed to allow corporations, rather than the government, to develop a vigorous market.

"(There should also be a) shift of focus towards economy-wide deregulation and incentives ... away from sector- or firm-specific incentives," he said. "Transaction costs and red tape also need to be reduced further."

The WB head went on to say that policies could be improved by ensuring open and competitive bidding processes in the infrastructure sector; enforcing transparently the rules on managing environmental and social risks and revenues in mining; and supporting massive public and private investments to build up a pool of skilled information technology workers.

Gov't to liberalize . . .

From page B1

tion or the amount of dollars that banks are allowed to buy from the spot foreign exchange market.

In a commentary dated Jan. 23, economists from Credit Suisse said monetary policy in the Philippines would "likely remain burdened by the challenge of managing capital inflows, which may prompt the authorities to relieve the pressure by liberalizing capital outflows."

Three possible measures expected by Credit Suisse to be adopted by the BSP as part of this liberalization were:

- Simplifying documentary requirements for buying foreign exchange for current account transactions (only transactions worth $5,000 and below are exempted from the tedious requirements).
- Raising banks' overbought foreign exchange limit, currently at the lower of 2.5 percent of unimpaired capital or $5 million whichever is lower.
- Increasing the ceiling on resident purchases of foreign exchange for investment abroad, currently at only $6 million.

"However, it is uncertain how rapidly these would work to stop the peso appreciation and stabilize money market rates," Credit Suisse said. It added that the BSP appeared to be focusing on the exchange rate rather than short-term interest rates as its operating target.

BSP Officer-in-Charge Nestor Espenilla Jr. said the BSP rates were maintained because these were "sufficient grounds for caution," given the uncertainty in oil prices and the risk to food prices posed by the El Niño dry spell.

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Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Jan. 23, 2007	Last Week Jan. 16, 2007
Bond Fund - Peso	1.61475	1.60837
Managed Fund - Peso	1.85889	1.83582
Growth Fund - Peso	1.69868	1.66326
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.3667	1.3650

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

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Investment Funds of Wealth Builder & Wealth Secure

UNIT PRICES (in Php)

	Jan. 22, 2007	Jan. 15, 2007
Fixed Income Fund	1.265110	1.260122
Balanced Fund	1.357483	1.342517
Equity Fund	1.529572	1.498189

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.
The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

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NISSAN

Lito Sansano Quimbo

of 47 Stonewall Court
Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey

peacefully joined our Creator on January 18, 2007
at the age of 45.

He is survived by his loving wife, **Leah Vera Quimbo**;
children: **Timothy**, **Kevin**, **John**, and **Mary**;
parents: **Juanita** and **Vicente Quimbo Sr.** (†);
parents-in-law: **Luis P. Vera** and
Ambassador Nida L. Vera;
sisters: **Annie**, **Mille**, **Tepton**, **Shonnie**;
brothers: **Nonoy**, **Paquito**, **Joey**;
half-sisters: **Pining**, **Etta** and **Charo**(†);
sister-in-law **Lena**;
brothers-in-law: **Bobet** and **Luigi**,
brothers and sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces.

Readers are requested to pray
for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body will lie in state at the Santuario de San Antonio,
Forbes Park, Makati City
from January 26 to 28, 2007.

Requiem Mass will be on Monday, January 29, 2007
at 1:30 p.m. at the Santuario de San Antonio.
Interment will follow at the Heritage Park,
Fort Bonifacio.

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not
want. He makes me lie down in
green pastures. He leads me beside
still waters. He restores my soul."
Psalm 23: 1-3

Atty. Zosima Castillo Hernandez

Lemery, Batangas

peacefully joined her Creator
on January 21, 2007 at the age of 93.

Her remains lie in state at her residence in Lemery Batangas.
Interment will be on Sunday, January 28, 2007
at Lemery Catholic Cemetery.

Our Dearly Beloved

Dr. Elvira Aquino-Villamin

former Mayor of Bansalan, Davao del Sur

Peacefully joined the Lord and her husband
Dr. Luis Villamin on January 23, 2007 at the age of 87.

Her children Marilou† & Roger† Piczon,
Tessie & Oscar† Lagman, Bing; grandchildren Christy,
Cathy & Jun†, Carrie & Jun, Cheryl, Robert & Elaine,
Dominic & Grace, Terence, Peachy & Cookie;
great-grandchildren, relatives and friends
request the pious readers to pray
for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state
at Sanctuarium, 739 G. Araneta Avenue
near Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will take place on Saturday,
January 27, 2007 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved

MARCOSA
De Ocampo MESINA

Peacefully joined our Creator
on January 24, 2007 at the age of 94.

Her loving children & their
spouse: **NOEMI Limgenco** (†),
ANDY & **Lorna Mesina**,
IRMA & **Bert** (†) **Castro**, **JIMMY Mesina**,
OLGA & **Abeling Samson**
and **CORA** & **Nestor Vendiola**;
grandchildren and great-grandchildren
request relatives and friends to join in
prayer for her eternal repose in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at Nacional
Memorial Homes Chapel 2-A,
G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 28, 2007
at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora,
Quezon City after the 1:30 PM Mass.

Capt. JAYSON AARON LIM PAGCU

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 22, 2007 at the age of 29.

His loving family, mother **Jing**; siblings **Aris**, **Christele** and **April** request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at Enriquez Funeral Home, Tarlac City. Interment will be on January 28, 2007 at 9:00 a.m.

Death Notice

MARCIAL G. LANDICHO

Died in the grace of our Lord on January 19, 2007 in California USA at the age of 87.

Her bereaved wife Gloria Zaguirre Landicho and children, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment today at the Rose Hills Cemetery, Los Angeles, California, USA.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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(TARELCO I)
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INVITATION TO BID

The Tarlac I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TARELCO I) invites qualified and eligible bidders to bid for the following:

LOT 1

A. Supply, Delivery and Installation of 69 KV Metering
B. Supply, Delivery and Installation of Primary and Secondary Protection
C. Reconditioning and Installation of 5 MVA Power Transformer

LOT 2

Construction of 69 KV Sub-Transmission Line from Matalapitap, Paniqui, Tarlac to Mabini, Moncada, Tarlac (10.8 KMS.)

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased starting January 29, 2007 until February 5, 2007 by eligible bidders upon submission of a written application to the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Four Thousand Pesos (P4,000.00) for each lot.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the office of the PBAC, TARELCO I, Amacalan, Gerona, Tarlac, with Tel Nos. (045) 931-0971 to 75. Pre-bid Conference will be held on February 6, 2007 at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon at the Coop Boardroom, also of the same address.

Sealed proposals in two (2) copies will be received by the TARELCO I PBAC at exactly 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon at the coop boardroom on February 9, 2007, at which time and place the said proposal will be opened and read in the presence of Bidders or Bidder's representative who choose to attend. Late submission will not be accepted.

- All bids submitted must be accompanied by a Bid Security equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of the total bid price.

TARELCO I hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects therein, and accept the bid that is most advantageous to the cooperative.

(Sgd.) **ALICE C. BALDOZ**
PBAC Chairman

(PDI--Jan. 25 & 26, 2007)

AFFIDAVIT

I, KIMIKO SAGAMI, of legal age, widow and now residing at, 3 - 7 - 10 NAKAICHYO TAKASAKI CITY GUNMA JAPAN, after having been sworn in accordance with law, depose and say that;

1. I am the only surviving Heir of Yoshitaka Sagami who died in the City of Makati, Metropolitan Manila, Philippines, on May 25, 2005 hereto attached as ANNEX "A" and made an integral part of this Affidavit

2. Said deceased left the following condominium units hereto attached as ANNEX "B" inclusive and more particularly described as follows:

CCT	UNIT OFFICE	FLR AREA	# of P.S.	FLOOR LOCATION	PARKING FLR AREA	EQUIV. GROSS FLR AREA	% SHARE
PT-17106	706	170 00	1	BASEMENT	12.5	176 25	0.9117
PT-17103	701	170 00	1	BASEMENT	12.5	176 25	0.9117
PT-17104	702	170 00	1	BASEMENT	12.5	176 25	0.9117
PT-17105	705	170.00	1	BASEMENT	12.5	176.25	0.9117
PT-17144	703	140.00	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146.25	0.7566
PT-17145	704	140 00	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146.25	0.7566
39425	1406	149.70	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146 25	0.7104
39411	102	97.44	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146 25	0.4624
39408	1409	121.41	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146.25	0.5761
39409	1401	149.70	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146 25	0.7104
39426	1411	65.10	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146 25	0.3089
39424	1404	121.41	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146 25	0.5761
39412	1410	121.41	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146.25	0.5761
39410	1403	121.41	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146 25	0.5761
39427	1405	65.10	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146 25	0.3089
39430	1408	65.10	1	BASEMENT	12.5	146.25	0.3089

3. Said deceased left one hundred fifty seven million Philippine pesos, more or less, debts

4. Pursuant to Rule 74, Section 1 of the Rule of Court of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, I hereby adjudicate unto myself the above described condominium units by means of this Affidavit and hereby files same with the appropriate Register of Deeds of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines with the request that said adjudication shall be made effective without judicial proceedings as prescribed by the above mentioned Rules of Court.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand this August 29, 2006 in the Tokyo, Japan.

(Signed)
KIMIKO SAGAMI

This is to certify that this document was subscribed before me by the above-named person (s) on this day August 29, 2006

(Signed)
Makazu Ikeda
Notary

(PDI--Jan. 26, 2007)

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1116
Telephone Nos.: 925-47-93 to 97
Email: emb@emb.gov.ph
visit us at http://www.emb.gov.ph

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

on the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) for the Proposed Rehabilitation and Modification (from Ferrochrome to Ferronickel) of PGMC's Existing Smelter Plant Project

Notice is hereby given to all parties who wish to give their opinion regarding the proposed **Rehabilitation and Modification (from Ferrochrome to Ferronickel) of PGMC's Existing Smelter Plant Project** to attend a Public Hearing scheduled on February 24, 2007 @ 10:00 AM at Manticao Covered Court, Poblacion, Manticao, Misamis Oriental.

This Public Hearing will be conducted concerning the review of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of the aforementioned Project by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

All interested parties who wish to attend or participate in this Public Hearing should first register in person or by mail with the **EMB at DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman Quezon City** c/o Ms. Esperanza A. Sajul, OIC-Chief, Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Division or with the Environmental Management Bureau Region X (Cagayan de Oro City) at telephone number (088) 726 6243, prior to the said hearing.

Individual and/or organizations may give their opinion in a concise position paper submitted to the EMB/EMB Region X on or before February 24, 2007.

For more details, please contact the EIA Division of EMB through Mr. Ernesto B. Villalva at telephone nos. (02) 920-2240 to 41 or emil at emb@emb.gov.ph.

(PDI – January 26 & February 2, 2007)

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"Death is not the extinguishing of the light; It is the turning off of the lamp because the bright morn has come."

MARY JAVIER RANADA

of Laoag City & Pasig City
3 January 1918 - 24 January 2007

*Has peacefully joined her husband who passed to eternal life exactly 33 years ago today **Judge Santiago Raguindin Ranada.***

Her children **Justice Santiago, Jr.** and **Evelyn de Leon, Ronald** and **Esther Visaya, Marilyn** and **Dr. Tony Donato, Modesty** (†) and **Julito** (†) **Agcaoili, James** and **Alice Ignacio, Susan** (†) and **Andrew** (†) **Suguitan, Fr. Anthony, SVD, Tomas** and **Benilda Magay, Charity** and **Alex Ligot, Lorenzo** and **Julie Gomez, Emmanuel** and **Malou Nanquil**, and **Georgie** (†); her brothers and sisters: **Naty** (†) and **Felix** (†) **Antonio, Pilar** and **Claudio** (†) **Teehankee, Memoy** and **Remy Flores, Joe** (†) and **Tessie Anderson, Saling** (†), **Eric** and **Margie Valdez, Anita** and **Ramon Aldea, Vicky** and **Vic Ruiz, Ben** and **Yoly Bocaling, Amparo** and **Joe Araullo, Emma** and **Rollie Ona, Vicente** and **Elen Paulate**; her grandchildren: **Sonny, RG, Cecile, Regan, Genie, Vivien, Ronjon, Robine, Mary Anne, Bernie, Pauline, Jude, Grace, Jay, Willy Boy, Maripaz, Anthony, Julius, Leonard, Fortune, Jay, Philip, Pia, Regine, Maricon, Romano, TJ, Margaretta, Andrea, Peewee, Carlo, Paolo, Frannie, Kelii, Ethan, Pauline, Cedric** and **Justine** as well as her great-grandchildren request the pious reader to pray for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Premier Chapel 1, Guadalupe, Makati City. Interment will be on Sunday, 28 January 2007, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

> *"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*
>
> **John 14:6**

More CLASSIFIED ADS on pages...

Commission on Elections A6
DAR-ARCPD A18
National Housing Authority A18
Province of Bukidnon A18

We remember with deep love and affection

SALVADOR "DOY" LAUREL

Once Vice President of the Philippines

*On his **third** death anniversary*
January 27, 2007

*We, his wife **Celia**; children, grandchildren, brother and sisters invite you to join us in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.*

MASSES WILL BE CELEBRATED IN THE FOLLOWING CHURCHES:

BASILICA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPCION, Batangas City	*7:00 a.m.*
BASILICA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPCION, Manila Metropolitan Cathedral Basilica, Intramuros, Manila	*7:30 a.m.*
CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, Tanauan City, Batangas	*6:30 a.m.*
DIVINE WORD MISSION SEMINARY (CHRIST THE KING, E. Rodriguez Sr. Blvd., Quezon City)	*6:30 a.m.*
IMMACULATE CONCEPCION PARISH, SAN AGUSTIN CHURCH, Intramuros, Manila	*7:00 a.m.*
IMMACULATE CONCEPCION PARISH, Pasig City	*12:15 p.m.*
MALATE CATHOLIC CHURCH, OUR LADY OF REMEDIES PARISH, Malate, Manila	*7:00 a.m.*
MARY THE QUEEN PARISH, Madison St., Greenhills West, San Juan, Metro Manila	*7:00 a.m.*
MINOR BASILICA OF THE BLACK NAZARENE, PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, Quiapo, Manila	*8:00 a.m.*
MINOR BASILICA AND NATIONAL SHRINE OF SAN LORENZO RUIZ, Plaza Lorenzo Ruiz, Binondo, Manila	*7:30 a.m.*
NUESTRA SEÑORA DE GUIA PARISH, M.H. del Pilar, Ermita, Manila	*7:30 a.m.*
OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL SHRINE PARISH, Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue, New Manila, Quezon City	*7:00 a.m.*
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH, 13th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City	*6:30 a.m.*
OUR LADY OF THE PILAR, Pilar Village, Las Pinas City	*6:00 a.m.*
OUR LADY OF SORROWS PARISH, F. B. Harrison St., Pasay City	*7:00 a.m.*
OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL CHURCH (REDEMPTORIST), Baclaran, Pasay City	*6:45 a.m.*
SAN ILDEFONSO PARISH, Makati City	*6:00 a.m.*
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO, Forbes Park, Makati City	*7:30 a.m.*
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City	*7:15 a.m.*
SHRINE OF MARY QUEEN OF PEACE, (OUR LADY OF EDSA), EDSA cor Ortigas Avenue, Quezon City	*12:15p.m.*
STA. CRUZ PARISH, Plaza Sta. Cruz, Sta. Cruz, Manila	*8:00 a.m.*
SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH CHURCH, Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City	*6:00 a.m./ 7:00 a.m./ 6:00 p.m.*
ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PARISH, Reposo St., Bel Air II, Makati City	*6:30 a.m.*
ST. JOHN BOSCO PARISH, Arnaiz St., Makati City	*6:30 a.m.*
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH, Pinaglabanan St., San Juan, Metro Manila	*7:15 a.m.*
ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER PARISH, Palanan, Makati City	*6:00 p.m.*
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PARISH, San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila	*7:15 a.m.*
STO. NIÑO DE PAZ, Greenbelt Chapel, Ayala Center, Makati City	*12:15 p.m.*
STELLA ORIENTIS CHAPEL, University of Asia and the Pacific, Escriva St., Pasig City	*12:05 p.m.*

CLASSIFIEDS

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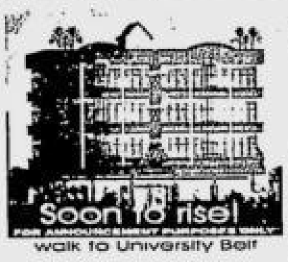

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
JP MORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A. -PHIL. CUSTOMER CARE CENTER 31/F, Philamlife Tower, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Nikhil Chopra	Delivery Leader
LUFTHANSA GERMAN AIRLINES Mez Level, Phinma Plaza, 39 Rockwell Centerl Drive, Makati City	Rosie Solomon	Station Manager
VERIZON COMMUNICATIONS PHILIPPINES, INC. 17/F, Tower 2, The Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala Ave., Makati City	James Eugene Norgard	Senior Engineer Manager
FIRST GAS POWER CORPORATION 3/F, Benpres Bldg., Exchange Road, Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Jori Paivio Liimatta	Operations and Maintenance General Manager
MTM ENGLISH.COM PHILS., INC. U-2606 Prestige Tower, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Bo Hwa Hwang	General Manager
E-MAPLE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION INC. 15/F, Strata 100 Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Seung Woo Lee	General Manager
STANDARD CHARTERED BANK 6788 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Reza Pely Rusly	Country Credit Head
GE MONEY SERVICING-PHILIPPINES, INC. Plaza A, Northgate Cyberzone, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Sreenivas Tanuku	Operations Planning and Analysis STIR
RAGA ONEZONE CORP. Unit 504 ALPAP II Bldg., Trade St. cor. Investment Drive, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Do Hyok Park	General Manager
JIREH TRAVEL & TOURS, INC. Unit 4, Arrowhead Plaza, Pres. Ave., BF Homes, Parañaque City	Kyoungah Kim (w/o Kim)	General Manager

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Jan. 26, 2007)

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COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE
CENRO-WEST, Lantawan
Pasonanca, Zamboanga City

LEASE OF PUBLIC LANDS

Notice is hereby given that the CENRO-WEST, Lantawan, Pasonanca, Zamboanga City will Lease to the highest bidder at 10:00 A.M. on March 15, 2007, the tract of land covered by Miscellaneous Lease Application No. 097332-21 of Concepcion L. Balaguer.

Location : Calarian, Zamboanga City
Description : MLI 0973322-000021
Area : 5,390 square meters
Appraised value of the land : Php 1,078,000.00
Total appraised value of the property : Php 14,552,483.04

All bids must be sealed and submitted to the Office of the CENR-WEST, at Lantawan, Pasonanca, Zamboanga City on or before the hour and date stated above and plainly "Bid for the Land described in MLI 097332-21." Bids must be accompanied with cash money order, treasury warrant, certified check, cashier's check for a sum equivalent to ten percentum (10%) of the bid. When a bid is withdrawn after the highest bidder is determined, the corresponding deposit thereof shall be forfeited to the government. No bid shall be less than the appraised value of the land. This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

(Sgd.) **TITO L. GADON**

(PDI–Dec. 22, 29, 2006; Jan. 5, 12, 19 & 26, 2007)

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#	TCT NO.	UNIT NO.	AREA (SQM)	NO. OF BR	INDICATIVE SELLING PRICE
1	42193	TA4F-03	61.62	2	1,725,000.00
2	42939	TA6F-07	68.63	2	1,922,000.00
3	42940	TA5F-08	42.65	1	1,152,000.00
4	42957	TA8F-03	62.60	2	1,753,000.00
5	42959	TA8F-05	47.23	1	1,275,000.00
6	42968	TA9F-03	62.60	2	1,753,000.00
7	43012	TA14F-03	60.83	2	1,703,000.00
8	43034	TA16F-03	59.67	2	1,671,000.00
9	43084	TB5F-03	74.49	2	2,160,000.00
10	43091	TB5F-10	75.15	2	2,179,000.00
11	43098	TB6F-00	75.50	2	2,190,000.00
12	43101	TB6F-03	79.12	2	2,294,000.00
13	43108	TB6F-10	75.15	2	2,179,000.00
14	43115	TB7F-00	75.50	2	2,190,000.00
15	43125	TB7F-10	75.15	2	2,179,000.00
16	43132	TB8F-00	75.50	2	2,190,000.00
17	43142	TB8F-10	75.15	2	2,179,000.00
18	43149	TB9F-00	69.35	2	1,942,000.00
19	43159	TB9F-10	75.15	2	2,179,000.00
20	43167	TB10F-01	65.00	2	1,820,000.00
21	43176	TB10F-10	75.15	2	2,104,000.00
22	43184	TB11F-01	65.00	2	1,820,000.00
23	43186	TB11F-03	69.90	2	1,940,000.00
24	43200	TB12F-00	75.50	2	2,190,000.00
25	43220	TB14F-03	69.29	2	1,957,000.00
26	43418	TC15F-06	87.67	2	2,630,000.00
27	43420	TC15F-08	48.16	1	1,348,000.00
28	43421	TB15F-09	46.97	1	1,315,000.00
29	43429	TC16F-06	87.67	2	2,630,000.00
30	43431	TC16F-08	48.16	1	1,348,000.00
			2,029.51		**57,917,000.00**

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Int'l investors see RP to be 'flavor of the month'

Country places second only to China in terms of viability, group says

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE IMPROVING INVESTMENT CLIMATE in the Philippines has drawn the attention of investors keen on putting their money here aside from China, according to Universal LRT Corp. Ltd. (ULC) managing director and chief executive Eli Levin.

ULC is a consortium composed of Alstom Transportation of France, the world's second-largest transportation system provider; Alstom Signalling of the United States; Redfort Assets Ltd., representing SM Investment Corp. and PentaCapital Management Corp.; the Merlin Pacific Capital Inc. Group; Earth Tech, a member of the Tyco International Group of the US; Engineering Equipment Inc., a member of the Yuchengo Group of companies; tcgi Engineers; EL International Holdings Group, and a group of Israeli investors.

ULC is the top contender vying for the $1.235-billion Metro Rail Transit 7 (MRT 7) project that will connect Tala in Caloocan City, to San Jose del Monte in Bulacan province.

Levin yesterday told reporters that ULC hopes to match the bid of 12 other parties for the MRT 7 project. The parties include Japanese, US, European and South Korean firms, as well as a "new Chinese group, with maybe $100 billion a year in turnover, and a big appetite for investments."

He also said the ULC group is keen on further investing not only in infrastructure projects but also in telecommunications, energy, and agro-exports from Clark.

"The investment climate is good, with the improving economy and increasing interest in development," Levin said.

Other experts have expressed similar views.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce yesterday said in a statement that the country's vast human and natural resources are drawing more foreign investors. PCCI said foreign direct investments, "which were hardly ever heard of in the last decade, have reached a mark of over a billion dollars in the last five years."

The country's largest trade organization also said that India has been showing a lot of interest in the Philippines as bilateral trade between the two countries reached a record $750 million last year.

Bank says RP credit upgrade long overdue

By Michelle V. Remo

INVESTMENT BANK DBS BELIEVES THAT THE Philippines deserves an upgrade in its credit rating.

"Frankly, an upgrade in the Philippine sovereign rating is long overdue," Singapore-based DBS said in its latest analysis on the Philippine economy. "We were among the first who recognized the improving trend of fiscal finances and its positive impact for the (peso)."

DBS said the government's success in trimming its budget deficit and reducing its debts, had served to improve its credit image.

For years, the country's sovereign ratings have been below investment grade.

The ballooning budget deficit in the past had taken its toll on the country's credit rating. Also, recent gains in the fiscal front only led to an improved credit outlook.

A credit rating is normally used as a guide by investors in making investment decisions. An upgrade in a country's credit rating positively affects investor sentiment, thereby reducing interest rates on its sovereign bonds and trimming the government's cost of borrowing.

Moody's Investor Service rates the Philippines at four notches below investment grade. Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings both assigned to the country credit ratings that are three and four notches below investment grade, respectively.

But due to macroeconomic developments in the country, the three international ratings firms decided to revise their credit outlook on the Philippines from "negative" to "stable."

A "stable" outlook means that a country is secured from any credit-rating downgrade in the short term.

The rating agencies revised their outlook on the Philippines after the government managed to reduce the budget deficit, and implemented several revenue-enhancement measures, such as the increase in the value-added tax rate.

"The government has fulfilled the condition set by ratings agencies to raise government revenue as percentage of GDP (gross domestic product)," DBS said.

While the country's credit ratings have not changed, foreign investors have already begun factoring in the macroeconomic developments in the country in their investments.

"In any case, we are glad that the markets have been more appreciative of these efforts, as witnessed by strong equities, lower bond yields, and record low credit spreads," DBS added.

Top players vie for slice of RP mining action

By Christine A. Gaylican

FIVE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST MINING companies are now in the Philippines, hoping to get a slice of the local mining action, government and industry officials said yesterday.

The firms—Phelps Dodge, which recently merged with Freeport McMoran, Anglo-American Holdings Plc., US-based BHP-Billiton; Swiss mining firm Xstrata Copper Ltd., and Canadian smelter Chemical Vapor Metal Refinery Co. (CVMR)—are now engaged in negotiations for possible joint venture projects, according to Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Angelo V. Reyes.

"The major players are now here ... (to usher in) the anticipated boom of the Philippine mining industry," Reyes yesterday said.

Chamber of Mines of the Philippines president Benjamin Philip G. Romualdez said that this development was due to the "clearer ... unchanging policy support of the government."

Romualdez pointed out that in the last quarter, the DENR carried out drastic changes to streamline the bureaucracy and improve services to the vital sector.

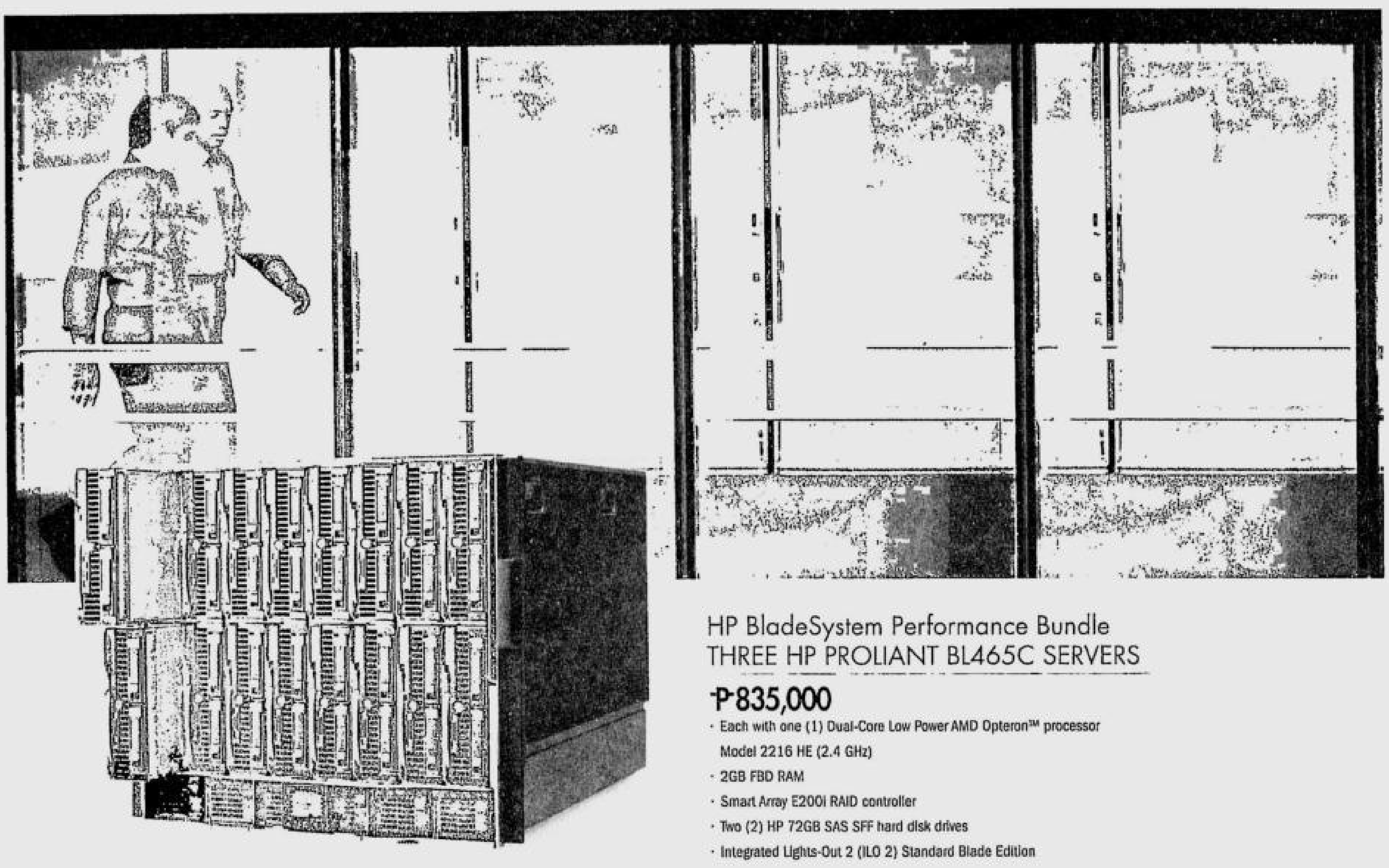
"This has prompted us to push through with the Asia-Pacific Mining Conference in May ... the very same conference we postponed last year," he said.

Last week, Reyes said, the DENR approved the exploration permit of Manila Mining Corp. (MMC).

Anglo-American Plc, through its local subsidiary Anglo-American Philippines Exploration Inc., is finalizing the joint venture agreement with MMC for the exploration of the Bayugo Copper Gold Project in Anislagan, Placer in Surigao del Norte.

Anglo-American is based in London with mining operations in different parts of the world.

Anglo-American has committed to spend an initial $10 million for exploration work over the next two years.



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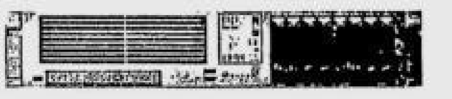

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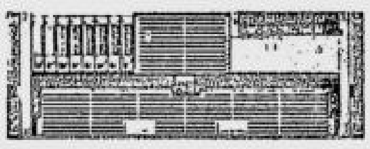

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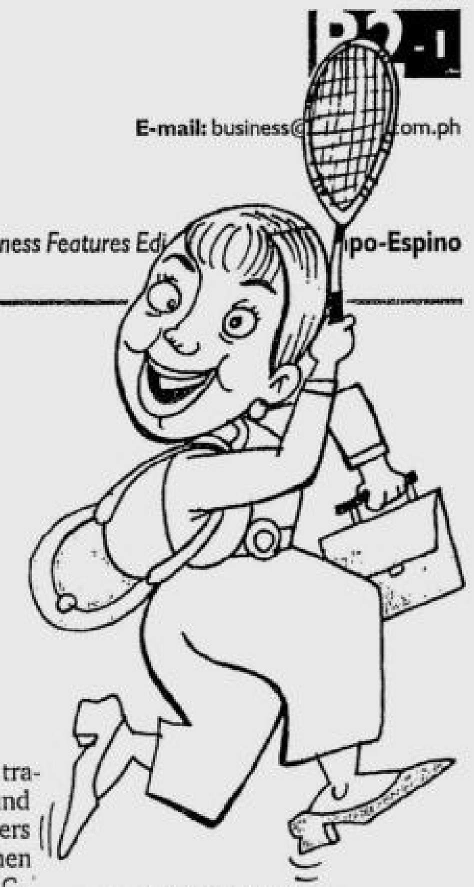


Hit markets for 2007

What active senior citizens, affluent young executives and the masses will buy this year

By Karen V. de Asis
Contributor

WHILE CHINESE HOROSCOPE experts and mainstream soothsayers debate the outcome of the Year of the Boar, nothing beats a close study of Philippine macro-environment trends to predict which markets may grow, businesses likely to prosper, products that will sell and customer segments that will be more responsive to product and services.

Here are 10 sector trends expected to show good performance in 2007:

Grey market

One, the grey market and age-defying products and services. A Global ACNielsen report released on November 2006 revealed that today's 60-year-olds are perceived to be the new middle age. The finding was based on a consumer survey conducted by the research company in 41 country markets.

This comes as no surprise as seniors today do not think about their age in general. Unless extremely tired or depressed, older people do not feel their age. This new behavior has resulted from a new lifestyle. With medical advancement, cosmetic surgeries, availability of health supplements, a new attitude toward a healthy lifestyle and wise use of their time, many silver citizens are able to keep a productive work and family life and as an added bonus, this while not looking their age at 60 years old.

However, the biggest challenge for silvers is how to enhance their memory and reduce their incidences of senior moments to sustain their productive life. Thus, beyond silver fashion, cosmetic surgeries, body sculpting, eye laser surgeries, the market remains largely untapped for memory enhancement pills, memory games for seniors and brain calisthenics sessions in more accessible senior-frequented places.

On a lighter note, the seniors too, are strong markets for nostalgia brands, brands that remind them of their youth e.g. Volkswagen, Ace bags, chocnut, etc. No wonder original retro models especially in designer brands are commanding higher prices.

Escapist products and services

Two, anxious and stressed netgens and escapist products and services. Examples are online gaming, gaming consoles, sci-fi and mythical entertainment and make-believe world wrestling entertainment matches.

Young people, 25 and younger, born in the Internet era, are today's victims of a fast-paced lifestyle, where everything that needs to be done and learned should have been done and learned yesterday, where boundaries have been eliminated and where talent is pitted not against one's own race but this time against the global talent pool. Relief from daily stress has become fodder for escapist products like Nintendo's Wii gaming console, Sony PSP, WWE, etc.

Healthcare markets

Three, health and wellness advocates and healthcare markets. The increasing cost of healthcare has pushed Filipino consumers to take proactive care of their health. With more than 20 percent of the Philippine population, about 20 million belonging to the 40-year-old-and-above range, there remains endless possibilities for new healthcare products and services including all types of nutraceuticals, even bracelets to sanitary wares that do daily body health checks, etc. along with the more popular soda substitutes, fitness regimens and diet trends.

Self-indulging products

Four, indulgent consumers and self-indulging products and services. While only 9 percent of the Philippine population may be able to sustain a truly comfortable life, one's economic status as evident among the mid-income group is no barrier to indulging one's self once in a while. There will always be a market for designer brands like Louis Vuitton, Tiffany, Prada, etc. even if it takes a bit more time to own one or that it consumes nearly more than a month's salary . Not to mention occasionally patronizing Starbucks or UCC coffee; listening to rock band music Hale and Cueshe and simply bar hopping; or joining friends at Metrowalk, Greenbelt, The Fort, etc. for Friday night fun.

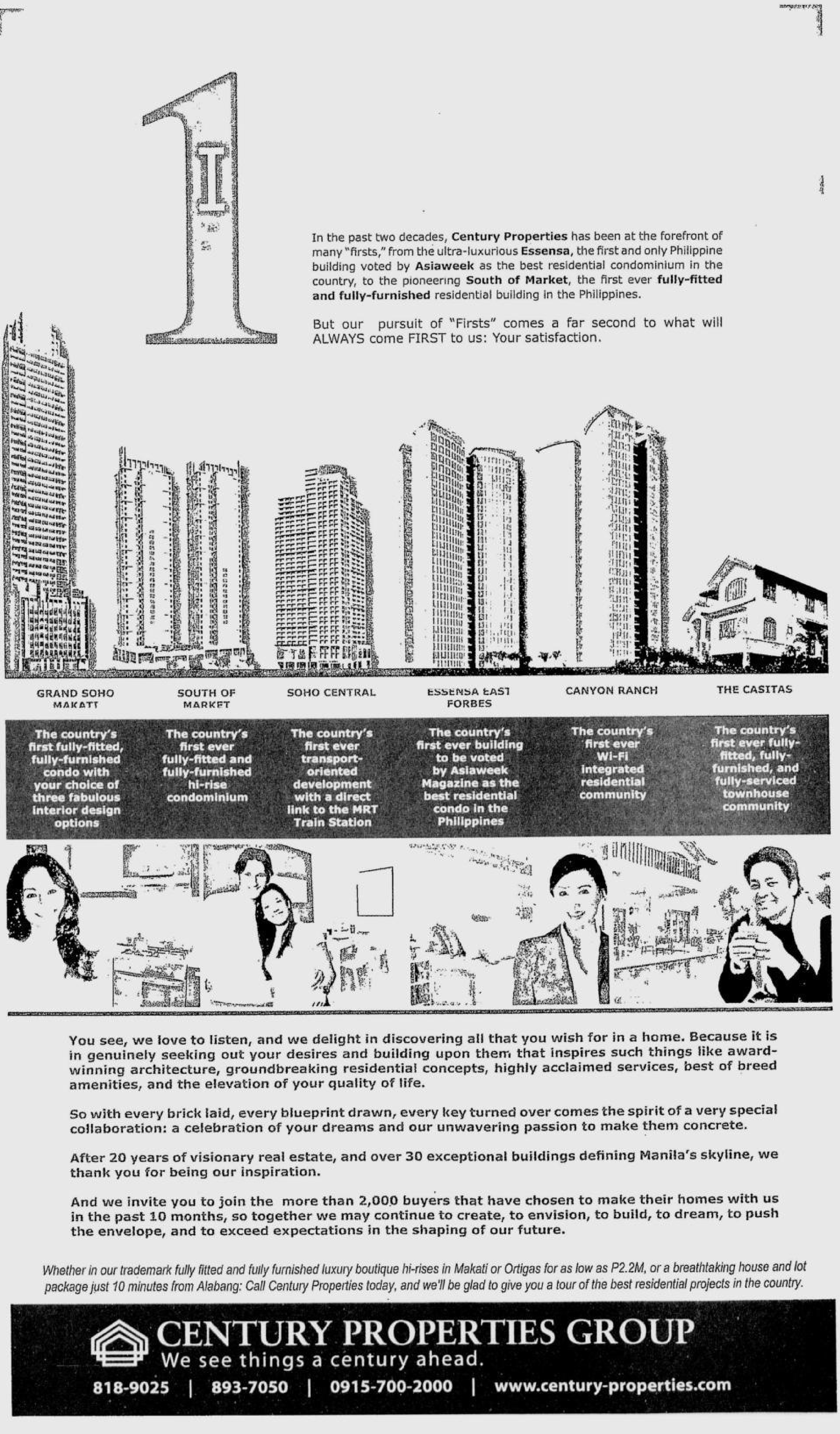
Travel and tourism

Five, upwardly mobile young cosmopolitans and travel and tourism. Young and paid well, some nearly at the top of their career, these upwardly mobile young professionals are often single, footloose and loving every bit of their freedom. On top of their list is to see the world by themselves or with their peer. A common sight lazing round the beach in Palawan or Boracay, traveling locally or overseas can become serious passion. With airfare rates friendlier these days, more exciting destinations available and the tourism infrastructure better organized in many countries, the travel market is open season to a strong, robust emergent market.

Branded products for males

Six, males and branded products. With the rising number of stay-at-home husbands and men taking over what was traditionally women's ground like shopping, advertisers need to understand how men respond to brands. An ACNielsen male homemak-

HIT MARKETS/ B2-2



In the past two decades, **Century Properties** has been at the forefront of many "firsts," from the ultra-luxurious **Essensa,** the first and only Philippine building voted by **Asiaweek** as the best residential condominium in the country, to the pioneering **South of Market**, the first ever **fully-fitted and fully-furnished** residential building in the Philippines.

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MasterIndex of consumer confidence reveals continued optimism in Asia-Pacific

MARKETS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION remain fairly optimistic about the first half of 2007, according to the latest MasterIndex of Consumer Confidence survey by MasterCard. The semi-annual survey showed that consumers in the Asia Pacific were more optimistic than six months as well as a year ago.

The index of consumer confidence (64.3) has risen from six months (57.4) and a year ago (57.7), and is above the historical average (59.5). Consumers were most optimistic about regular income (75.4), followed by the economy (62.4), stock market (61.7), quality of life (61.7) and employment (60.4).

From a regional point of view, factors likely to have contributed to an improved consumer sentiment included the decline in crude oil prices and strong performance of the stock markets. Country-specific factors included the election of a new prime minister in Japan and its highly positive Tankan reports on business confidence, and the ousting of the former prime minister in Thailand.

Ten of the 13 Asia-Pacific markets have seen an improvement in their consumer confidence levels from six months ago. Vietnam continued to be the most optimistic market (93.7), followed by Hong Kong (88.8), Singapore (82.5) and China (81.2).

In the Philippines, consumer confidence has recovered from the very low levels in 2005 and has turned marginally optimistic. The current Philippine MasterIndex at 57.2 was a further improvement from 51.9 six months ago and 28.9 a year ago and is above its historical average of 49.1. While consumers were overall optimistic, they remained still uncertain about the economy (46.7), employment (45.0) and quality of life (42.8) where sentiments were still slightly pessimistic.

This positive outlook of consumer confidence for the first half of 2007, however, has to be viewed in the context of a widely expected slowdown in growth in the United States, and possibly China, two key drivers of exports for Asia.

"Many markets across Asia/Pacific are still heavily dependent on exports. Net exports have contributed more than domestic demand to economic growth in recent years in most Asian markets. There is a need to build a more robust domestic sector. Consumer sentiment is fairly optimistic in (the first half of) 2007 but things might change quickly in the second half of the year if growth slows sharply in the US, leading to a decline in export demand for Asia," said Yuwa Hedrick-Wong, economic adviser for the Asia Pacific for MasterCard Worldwide.

The latest MasterIndex survey, the region's most comprehensive and longest running consumer confidence survey, was conducted from Oct. 11 to 30, 2006, and involved 5,405 consumers across 13 key Asia-Pacific markets. In its 14th year, the bi-annual survey analyzes prevailing consumer perceptions of economic conditions for the six-month period ahead. The scores ranging between zero and 100 are based on responses on five variables: employment, economy, regular income, stock market and quality of life.

The MasterIndex is calculated based upon percentage response figures, with zero as the most pessimistic, 100 as most optimistic and 50 as neutral. The survey has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus four percentage points at the 90-percent confidence level.

Guerrero is first Cannes Lions jury president from SEA

GUERRERO

LONDON—DAVID Guerrero, chair and chief creative officer, BBDO Guerrero Ortega, Philippines, has been appointed as this year's Radio Lions jury president, the organizers of the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival recently announced. David is also the first Cannes Lions jury president from Southeast Asia

David founded BBDO Guerrero Ortega in 1998. Under his leadership, it has consistently been ranked as one of Asia's leading creative agencies, and is currently "Agency of the Year" in the Philippines according to Campaign Brief Asia, which has also named David as one of the region's top 10 creative directors.

David won his first radio award while a student copywriter in London. When working in Hong Kong, where he was responsible for a worldwide campaign for Cathay Pacific Airways, David won a rare radio trophy at Hong Kong's Media awards. After moving to Manila he contributed to the book "Cutting Edge Radio" and helped establish his country's first dedicated awards in the medium.

David has chaired juries at the Asia Pacific Adfest, the Melbourne Art Directors Club and served on last year's Radio Lions jury. He has won awards at all the major shows, including Golds at Cannes and Clio and the Grand Prix at London International.

Launched in 2005, Radio Lions honors the best international creative radio advertising. The aim is to raise its profile to the high standard that has been reached by the other categories judged in Cannes, elevating and recognizing radio as an important element of the media mix.

The 54th International Advertising Festival, the Cannes Lions, will be held from June 17-23, 2007 in Cannes, France.

It is the largest gathering of worldwide advertising professionals and advertisers as well as the most prestigious annual advertising awards. Each year, over 10,000 visitors from the advertising and allied industries attend this event to celebrate the best of creativity across all media mix, discuss industry issues and network with one another. Over 25,000 ads from all over the world are showcased and judged at the festival. Winning companies receive the highly coveted Lion trophy, honoring the most creative TV/cinema, print, outdoor, interactive, radio, sales promotion, integrated advertising, as well as the best media and direct marketing solutions.

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Home-based entrepreneurs with worldwide reach

By Raquel P. Gomez

HENRY CHUA, A FORMER NEWSPAPER editor who suffered a stroke several years ago, one day tapped the online world of eBay.

He began selling his collection of stamps. Today he earns income by just staying in a corner of his room.

Full-time mom and wife Jay Cunanan-Canlas started selling her piles of books on eBay and now has a network of friends who shares with her a deep love for books.

Jade Guinto-Lacsa left a high-paying job as a call center agent in Manila to become a full-time mother to three children in Subic. To combat the boredom of staying at home, she engaged in a lucrative business of selling designer bags, apparel and toys at eBay.

More than two years since eBay, the world's largest online marketplace, was introduced in the Philippines, a number of Filipinos got hooked on "eBaying" and became instant online entrepreneurs.

JAY CANLAS (rightmost) with other eBay booksellers whom she meets up at SM

Emerging entrepreneurs

These emerging Filipino entrepreneurs are now part of eBay's worldwide community of individuals and businesses selling goods and services online. Ebay's 125 million users worldwide, who are trading at least some 48,000 categories of products and services, have incredibly spawned a global e-commerce.

A stamp and comics collector, Chua started initially on eBay Philippines as a buyer. Because of a stroke, he was compelled to stay at home and his refuge was the Internet. He began the habit of buying comics online, particularly on eBay sites. At one point his comics purchase amounted to P50,000 a month and this made him think about selling stuff online to recoup some of that money.

Chua has about half a million stamps in his collection, many of which are rare and in pristine condition. With the help of a photo scanner provided by his daughter's boyfriend, Chua posted photos of his stamps on his eBay store and successfully sold his series of "Vatican" labeled stamps. Chua says this buyer became a repeat customer who has bought a total of P10,000 worth of stamps.

Soon Chua encountered stamp buyers from abroad. Memorable buyers include a guy from Germany who placed bids on hundreds of German stamps. Another German guy bought P11,000 worth of "Buenos Aires" stamps. A Spanish guy bought a stamp whose worth was significantly less than the cost of transporting the stamp to Spain. He shouldered the airmail cost including the 15 percent service charge by the bank in Spain for the transfer of payment to Western Union Philippines. One stamp buyer from Cebu, out of gratitude, even brought Chua, Otap biscuits.

Chua's buyers usually post payment through Western Union, G Cash, and bank deposit. The local eBay has yet to expand Paypal, credit cards, or other online money transfer services, so most sellers resort to other methods of payment.

Life changing

Chua says his eBay experience has changed his life dramatically. He says despite his condition he feels empowered financially having the capacity to help in shouldering some household expenses.

"If you're a homebound person and you want to earn money, you can sell online. The advantage of selling online is like having a store that's open for 24 hours and there are still no charges yet."

Downside

Jay Cunanan-Canlas sometimes feels a part of her is being taken away every time she has to part with an old book to a buyer. A book lover and collector since a child, Canlas says dealing with a loss of a book that had become part of her childhood is the only downside to her now chosen field of selling books online.

Canlas has been selling books on eBay Philippines for almost a year now. She owns three stores—Shoshoink, which sells romance books, Shoshoink2, which sells classified and children's books, and Strictly Classics, which focuses more on classic books. All her stores or eBay sites have more than 100 as positive feedback scores.

Determine honesty

Ebay employs the feedback scores to help buyers and sellers determine the honesty of the members.

"People are encouraged to be honest with their dealings because of the feedback scores. You get to know if a person is honest or not through the feedbacks."

In setting up her online stores, Canlas did a little research, such as setting up the terms and conditions of the purchase and even putting designs on the website to make it more appealing to browsers. On the average, she places about 300 books per store. You can just imagine Canlas' house, which looks more like a stockroom with piles of books spilling even to her bathroom.

She says she has read almost all the collection. "If someone bids on a book I haven't read, I read it right away."

Addicting

Managing an online store has become an addicting activity to Canlas who stays in front of the PC at 7 a.m. till late night. "When I wake up, it's the first thing I do. Before I retire at night, it's the last thing I do. It's a 24-hour store and you can see people bid and outbid each other near the end of auction time. You capture this market of people who don't sleep at night."

Canlas says she has witnessed some furious bidding action happening on her site when the book by Susan Elizabeth Philips she posted with an initial price of only P140 went up to P1,200.

Within months of "ebaying," Canlas has forged rewarding friendship with other online booksellers and buyers. Some of her clients in the province provide her with a list of books they want and send her presents. One buyer from Sorsogon has constantly swapped Asterix books and items with her. Canlas also meets up with other eBay booksellers for a cup of coffee at SM City Mall.

A former writer for a magazine, Canlas says getting into eBay for her is an "adventure," allowing her to meet new people and to cope with situations such as encountering hard-to-please buyers. She did give out a couple of negative feedbacks to people who were joy bidders.

"Online selling is engaging, fun and encourages meeting new friends. Ebay is a place where one person's trash is another's treasure."

Trusting buyer

Jade Guinto-Lacsa remembers with fondness one customer from Dipolog City who bid on 100 pieces of Abercrombie shirts barely two months after she opened her eBay site Maskinanu76 in March last year.

"Being new and with hardly any feedback score to back up my reputation, I was surprised that someone would trust me with that big amount of money," says Lacsa.

Lacsa gets her items from a sister-in-law who owns and manages a boutique in Olongapo. She happily says that she has recently reached the "powerseller" status having accumulated more than 300 feedback scores.

"What business would be this good? I earn while being a stay-at-home mom."

Although a number of Filipinos are engaging in e-commerce, thanks to eBay and other online selling sites such as the local auction site Bidshot, e-commerce has yet to take a significant foothold in the Philippines.

According to the website Internetworldstats.com, the Philippines is among the lowest in Asia in terms of Internet use or penetration. According to the site, the country has more than 7.8 million Internet users, representing only 6 percent of the entire population, with majority of them concentrated in Metro Manila and belonging to the A, B and C classes, age ranging from 13 to 30 years old.

Hit markets for 2007

From page B2-1

er proprietary study revealed that men preferred brands that were more familiar; and valued word of mouth endorsements from family and friends. Men were less inclined to be impulse buyers and were not likely to spend a lot of time shopping. Because men are rational buyers they appreciate packaging labels that carry relevant information that would help them make a decision about the product or service.

Home office

Seven, home office and pay for performance workers and home-based industries and portable business equipment. Home and work-life balance drives the home-office business-office worker. With business facilities that are more portable and easier to own and install in homes; ubiquitous technology access; more and more highly skilled workers and talent are turning to half-time work, pay for performance contract assignments and/or multi-engagements while doing some, if not all of their work at home with spare time to attend to family matters in between work.

Pink market

Eight, the pink market and the real estate, leisure travel and tourism, cosmetic and body sculpting surgeries. While aesthetic enhancements are worn like a badge by the pink market, this is not the only category that benefits from this group of hard-working, high net worth individuals. Self-indulgence and family relationships share equal billing in the prink market's priorities. They have strong presence in the real estate, travel and tourism and cosmetic healthcare categories.

Eco-friendly products

Nine, environmental advocates and eco-friendly products like bio-fuel and/or ethanol-based products, green electronics, organic pharmaceuticals and clothing. As world consciousness about the importance of preserving the natural environment and addressing issues about global warming, reducing toxic wastes, managing energy use, recycling products, etc. rises, more and more products and services will be introduced and marketed precisely on this platform. Eco-friendly products and services are certain to thrive in the future as governments around the world are pressured to preserve their side of the environment in the interest of human survival.

Commodity items

Ten, commodity items and the predominantly *masa* market. In a nation where 90 percent of the market has a household income of roughly P15,000 ($300) and below, there will always be a market for commodity products and services, largely price brands, even imitations. Because Filipinos have been raised in a consumerist society, likely appealing are cutoffs from the original branded items without the pricing level of the original ranging from food to apparel to electronics, etc. e.g. local luncheon meat in place of Spam, Louis Vuitton first or second grade imitations versus the original, etc. No wonder *tiyangges* are a haven for many.

Every New Year is a year of opportunity. As long as the market has been identified, profiled and its needs are served, each year will always be a good if not robust and truly blessed year.

(Feedback at kdeasis@skyinet.net or www.karendeasis.com.)

RP to leapfrog Asia on call center growth

Country to beat major China, Singapore, Malaysia

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINES WILL BEAT CLOSE neighbors Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore in terms of call center growth rate as well as giants like India, a mature contact center market, and China, an emerging market with a massive workforce and very cheap services.

This, according to the 2006 Asian Contact Centre Industry Benchmarking Report conducted by callcentres.net, Asia Pacific's leading call and contact center research and publishing company.

Conducted among 747 contact centers in the Philippines, India, Singapore, China, Malaysia and Thailand, the study commissioned by contact center solutions company etalk and tech giant Cisco Systems assessed contact center strategy, operations, human resource management, technology, customer service, channel management, outsourcing, key performance indicators and management challenges.

All roads lead to growth

The study estimates that the total 576,000 seats in the countries studied would increase to 704,500 in 2007, a growth rate of 23 percent from last year. The majority of Asian contact centers (56 percent) are dedicated to customer service, 15 percent to outbound sales, 14 percent to technical support, 12 percent to inbound sales and two percent to collections.

Singapore's 19,000 seats and Malaysia's 28,000 seats are both projected to grow at 32 percent. China (130,000) will grow at 22 percent and India (270,000) at 16 percent. Thailand is projected to grow by 33 percent but it only has 24,000 seat base.

The Philippines, meanwhile, has 105,000 seats and is projected to grow 33 percent this year to 140,000 seats.

How do we get there?

Callcentres.net president Dr. Catriona Wallace says we need not look farther than our own shores, but local contact centers must wrestle with challenges in human resources, disaster preparedness, and technology to be competitive.

"Growth in the contact center industry in Asia was traditionally driven by the outsourcing sector. Now we are seeing strong growth, not only by the outsourcers, but also in contact centers servicing domestic markets," Wallace says.

"In the Philippines, 78 percent of the industry services the local market and 34 percent provide international service."

The study said growth in the industry is also reflected in strong technology purchasing and upgrading plans for Asian contact centers. Up to 54 percent of Asian contact centers plan to purchase new contact center technology in 2007 and 62 percent are also planning to upgrade their existing technology. About 70 percent of centers in the Philippines intend to purchase new technology in 2007.

The top three contact center technologies to be purchased in 2007 will be voice over Internet protocol or VoIP, workforce management and call recording systems, says eTalk marketing chief Roger Woolley.

"The outsourcing sector appears to drive growth in innovation and technology adoption in the region, and this again is led by the Philippines," Wallace says.

"Cisco has seen growth rates of over 80 percent for our Unified Contact Center business in the Asia Pacific region. The trend toward Internet protocol (IP)-based contact centers is driven by a highly competitive business environment and increasingly tech-savvy customers who are demanding greater interaction," says KC Soh, Cisco director for solutions marketing in Asia Pacific.

"The IP-enabled contact center is the way of the future," Wallace says.

Continuing search for the extraordinary

WHAT IS EXCELLENCE? THE WORD IS USED so often that its meaning has somewhat lost its luster. Excellence isn't merely being the best in the field; it is a choice of beating the odds no matter how high the stakes and of pursuing the superlative instead of the norm and the mediocre.

For 28 years, the Metrobank Foundation has used excellence as a call to arms in the search for the individuals who have made it their life's mission to go above and beyond the call of duty. From teachers, scholars and promising mathematicians, to policemen and women, soldiers, and budding young national artists, the Foundation has seen the significance of these outstanding Filipinos contribution to society and has given them the recognition they deserve.

In its quest to discover and recognize these renaissance men and women, the Foundation has established programs that have become a benchmark among corporate foundations. The Search for Outstanding Teachers, The Country's Outstanding Police in Service, The Outstanding Philippine Soldier and the Metrobank Art and Design Excellence have honored and recognized those who have devoted their lives to their craft while giving substantial contributions to their communities. Not to forget the youth, the College Scholarship Program and the Metrobank Math Challenge have brought out the potentials of the youth; most of whom are now making their mark in their respective lines of work. These youngsters are now agents of change—making a difference and making their country proud.

Through the years, the Foundation has become an active proponent of corporate social responsibility. It is the organization's commitment to lead the private sector in empowering society and helping its countrymen realize their fullest human potential that sets the Foundation apart from other social development players.

Leaders with vision

"It is our belief that a country can only develop fully if its citizens are given the opportunity to attain their greatest potential. This can only come about if the citizenry has a supportive environment which put a premium on achievement, and if people's efforts are buttressed by a culture of excellence," stated George SK Ty, chair of the Foundation.

His determination and long term vision for Metrobank to become a premier universal bank of international standing extends to his passion and commitment of fostering companies that are responsible corporate citizens making meaningful contributions for the economic and social development of the communities in which the Bank serves.

The Foundation was also fortunate to have the guidance and wisdom of Placido L. Mapa, Jr. whose long career in the Bank has helped the Foundation mature into what it is today. Aniceto "Chito" Sobrepeña serves as the president of the Foundation.

Promoting excellence as a way of life is the legacy the Foundation can give Filipinos; honoring outstanding individuals for their commitment to pursue the highest standards in their professional as well as personal lives and who serve as models of dedication, competence, integrity and professionalism.

Soap making course in UP Baguio on Feb. 3

THE GOLDEN TREASURE SKILLS AND DEvelopment Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap-making in Baguio City at the Auditorium of the University of the Philippines, along Governor Pack Rd. on February 3 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are sourcing of materials, costing. There will be a hands-on experience on how to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, bar detergent soap, herbal bath soap (papaya, kalamansi, cucumber, oatmeal, etc.), powder soap. Bonus courses on how to make liquid bleach, tile and bowl cleaner, fabric softener, car shampoo.

For questions call 02-952-40-28; 02-436-78-26; 02- 951-29-66; and 02-913-65-51

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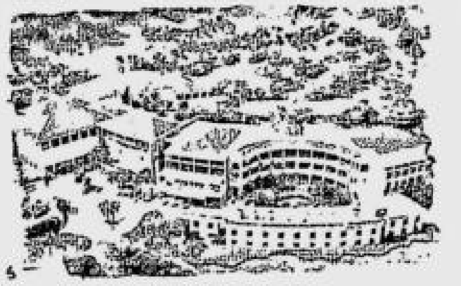

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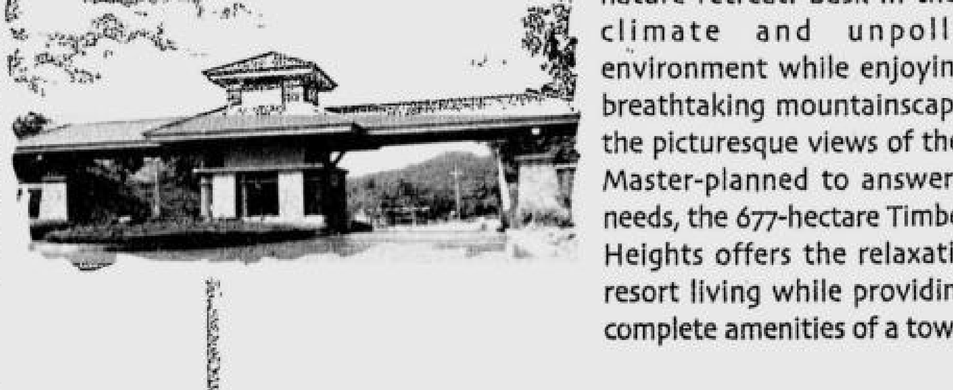

The Ranch HLURB LTS # 14578
Banyan Ridge HLURB LTS # 11957
Mandala Residential Farm Estates HLURB LTS # 10476

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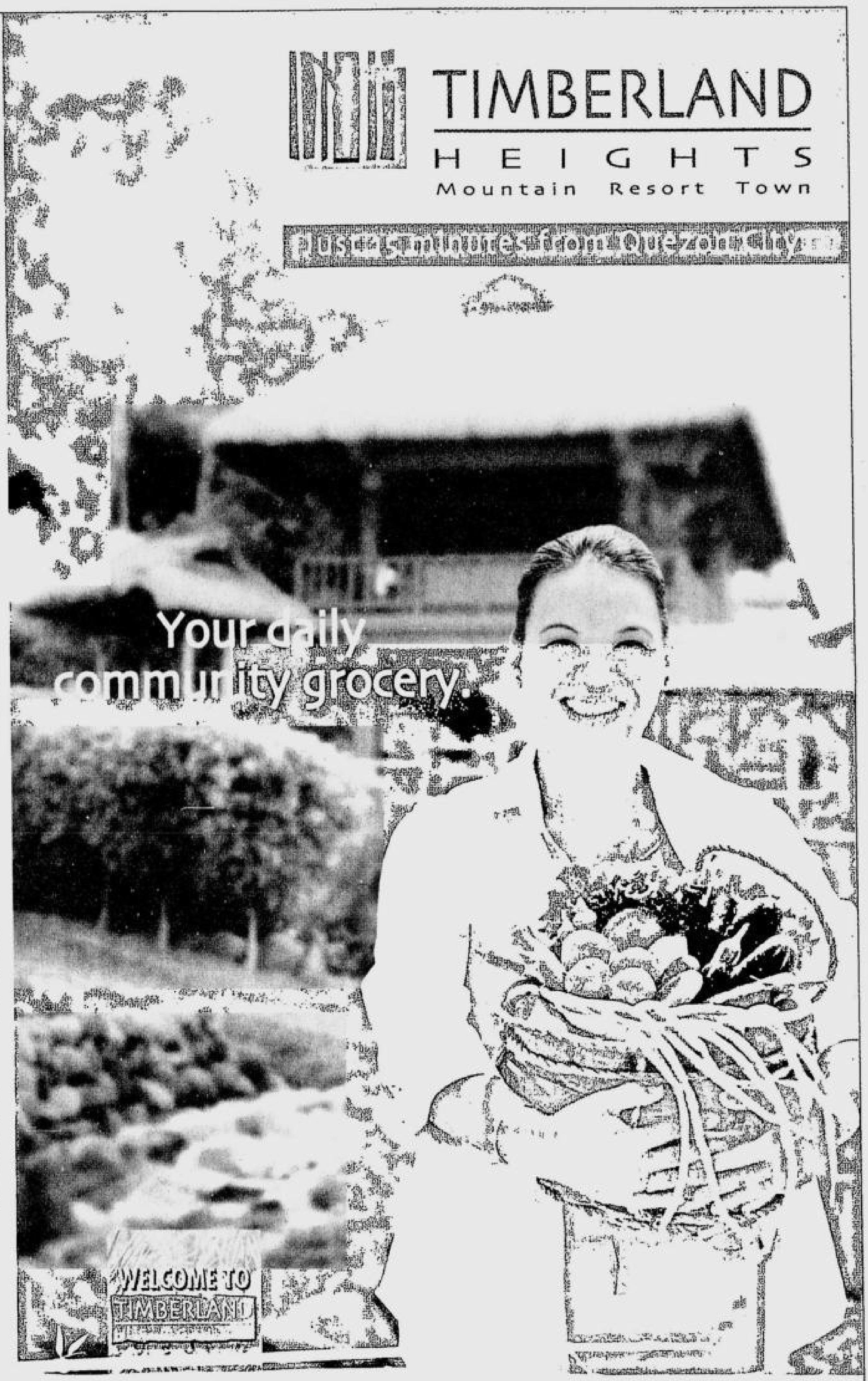

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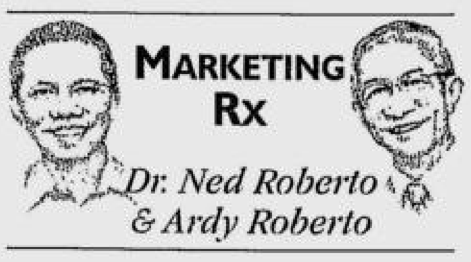
FILINVEST
INVEST ON SOLID GROUND

Seven resolutions for marketers in 2007—Part 2

Stop being fooled into buying awards to build your brand



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

APOLOGIES TO OUR READERS FOR THE delay in publishing the second and last part of this series. Here it is! Thanks for your patience.

As a marketer, why not resolve to…

No. 5. Build your brand by putting more time and resources into Public Relations.

Resolve to read The Fall of Advertising and The Rise of PR by Al Ries and Laura Ries. A controversial book that was—or still is—a wake-up call for an advertising industry obsessed with winning creative awards. PR practitioners, of course, love every page of this book.

Why put more money into PR? Ries and Ries build the case that PR builds brands because it is more credible than advertising. People tend to believe the stories they read or hear more than the advertising that "interrupts" their reading, viewing, or listening.

Here's Al Ries' advice:

"Over (the last) several decades, advertising has gotten more expensive at the same time as there has been a dramatic increase in the volume of advertising. These two factors make advertising less effective (too much volume) and less efficient (too expensive.)

Advertising agencies have responded to this problem by de-emphasizing selling and emphasizing the creativity of the advertising. As long as everyone was aware of a company's advertising what difference did it make if nobody bought the client product, went the thinking. Selling is not our problem, said the advertising industry. Creating awareness by creative advertising is what we are all about.

Advertising has many advantages: You can reach exactly the right people at the right time with the right message as often as you want to reach them.

But advertising has one major problem. Advertising lacks credibility. People just do not believe what they read (or see or hear) in an advertisement. They recognize the fact that advertising is self-serving. What you say about yourself has little or no credibility. Contributing to the credibility problem, of course, is the volume of advertising. Consumers turn off most advertising because there is just too much of it. In many ways advertising is like spam on the Internet. It's not believable because there is too much of it and the messages are self-serving.

Public relations or PR has many disadvantages. You can't control the media, you can't control the timing, and you can't control the message. But it has one major advantage: PR has credibility. Consumers tend to believe what they read in the editorial pages of newspapers and magazines and what they hear on radio and television from independent people. It's what we call "the third party effect." What others say about you has credibility.

PR and advertising can work together. Use PR first to create credibility for the brand. Then use Advertising second to reaffirm and reinforce that credibility.

We recommend that companies launch new brands with PR only. Then when the brand has awareness and credibility in the mind, the company can switch to advertising to maintain the brand."

No. 6. Stop being fooled into buying awards to build your brand

Winning awards for your company or brand can be very good PR for you. But it's funny how thousands of companies, both large and small, can be duped into buying awards. In the past year or so, we've seen good reputable companies emblazon on their print ads and brochures the dubious logos of such awards that were practically sold to them.

Other "entrepreneurial" deviants, determined to make a quick buck, have joined the bandwagon of selling awards. In the past few months, we've been getting faxes and calls from these deviants congratulating us on our accomplishments. Now would we mind paying the "joining fee" to participate in the awards program? Ha, ha, ha.

Legit or just moneymaking?

Because of the current proliferation of these business and marketing awards, a good number of our marketing friends have asked: "Is this award legit?"

It pays to do a little checking into the award giving body, company, or so called "Institute" before joining. Many bodies do organize awards for both fund raising and recognition but are definitely legit. Take, for example, the Clio advertising awards in the US or the Araw Awards that accompany the Philippine Ad Congress. Every entry pays a fee that isn't exactly cheap. But participating ad agencies don't seem to be bothered and no adverse negatives are heard about the award's required entry fee. Of course there are awards where the entries do not pay but are instead "paid" to those nominees who win as in the case of the most prestigious award in the world: the Nobel Prize (Winners get a $1M check). The Ramon Magsaysay Awards, known as the Nobel Prize of Asia, does the same thing but the check is in pesos—about P1M. These are the "Superbrands of Awards." Their branding carries the name of their founder who is known and acknowledged for his or her life of excellence and professional and personal values.

Awards for sale

We've received some concerned calls from company heads and marketing professionals who have been receiving what look like generic form letters from awards program organizers. The letters inform them that, based on 'consumer surveys' their brands have been selected as a winner in a category. Some of these shoppers/brand/marketing award promotional campaigns then ask for a P15,000 to P50,000 award support fund/subsidy. The "leading" solicitor of such awards for sale has a team of account executives. They in turn "sell" thousands and thousands of awards on a local/regional and national level and asks awardees to shell out at least P15,000 for a plaque and the right to use the award logo on their marketing collaterals. Do the math—that's a cool P15M for every thousand awards that you give!

According to one respected but skeptical marketing professor, the difference is that these awards programs inform you that you have won already and to participate in the awards program and to include your brand name in the subsequent advertising and promotions, all you need to do is return the contract that accompanies the congratulatory letter together with your 'support fund' or 'subsidy.' "What they are doing are selling awards to companies!", says the marketing professional who received several awards confirmation letters for his brand but refused to pay the award subsidy/fund that was asked of him.

No. 7. Keep on learning.

We always end our MarketingRx New Year's resolution's with this one and we see no reason to change or replace it. As a marketing executive, you must have a personal growth plan to be a better, more effective marketer. Keep on reading the best and latest books, journals, and articles on marketing. Go back to "school" by attending marketing seminars and conferences here and abroad. Marketing is one of the most challenging careers characterized by constant change. To rely on what you learned about two years or a year ago is business suicide. Keep on learning and you'll have a really prosperous new year!

Feedback at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net. God bless!

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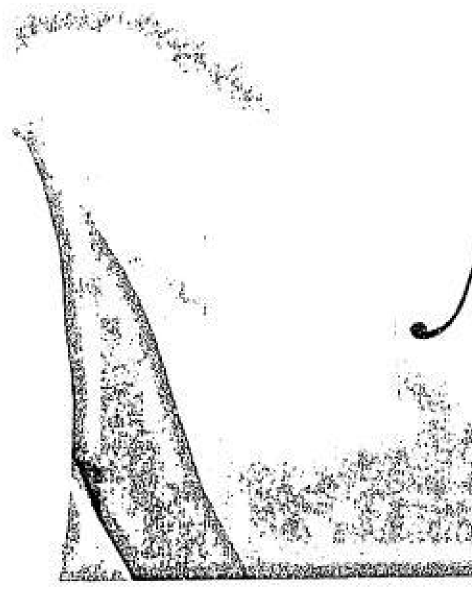


LWD

THE LITTLE WHITE DRESS, or LWD to me, has always been a fashion mirage. I've seen it many times in past collections, but it has never really hit its style crescendo—until now. This time, it seems, the LWD has staying power.

Jenni Epperson

In pop-culture history, certain unforgettable icons have elevated the LWD to a sexy, sassy fashion statement even more than its dark counterpart, the little black dress.

Think back to old Hollywood. Who can forget Marilyn Monroe's immortal pose in "The Seven Year Itch," in her seductive, body-hugging white number? Or Elizabeth Taylor's youthful glow in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof"?

Fast forward to a few decades later in the celebrity sphere, to that episode of "Sex and the City," where Carrie Bradshaw strutted down busy Manhattan streets looking like a fresh-faced summer angel, carrying a white umbrella to give her style statement an exclamation point.

Even though the little black dress will always be a favorite of mine, and has been my uniform for so long, I am embracing white as the color of summer for this season.

White is perfect for accentuating your tanned skin! But I'm not very fond of the frilly eyelet or ruffled white dresses, for those are more part of the bohemian trend that just won't die (even if I think its official demise is long overdue!)

What I love is a crisp white shirtdress paired with a metallic or a colorful belt to tie everything together.

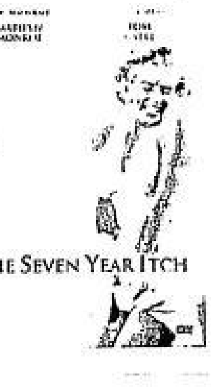
Myth about the LWD: Some believe that white makes you look bigger, or that it's just too stark, but it's not always the case.

LWD/ C2

Iconic Little White Dresses

ELIZABETH Taylor in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof"

SARAH Jessica Parker as Carrie Bradshaw in "Sex and the City"



MARILYN Monroe in "The Seven Year Itch"

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0211 Series of 2007

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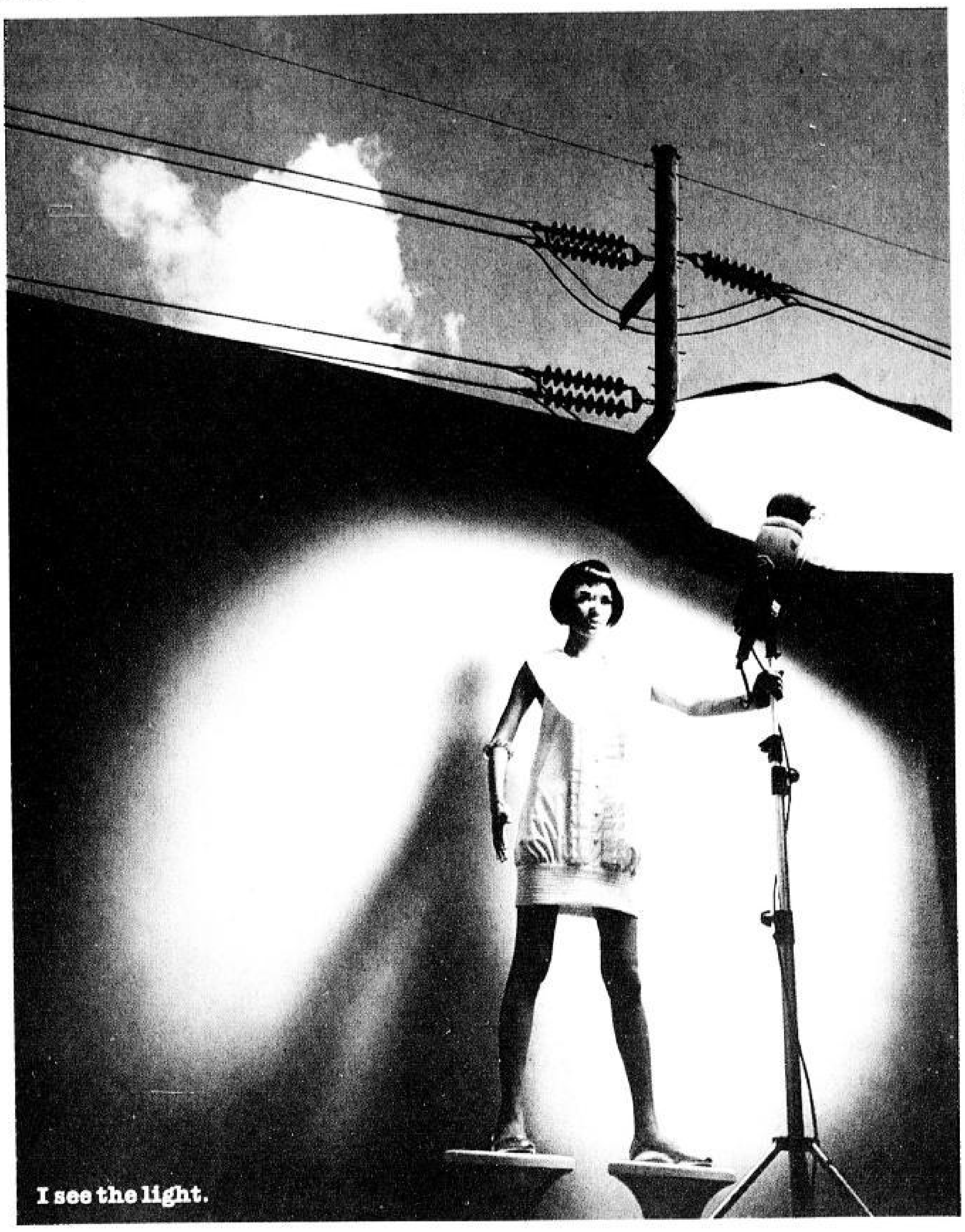
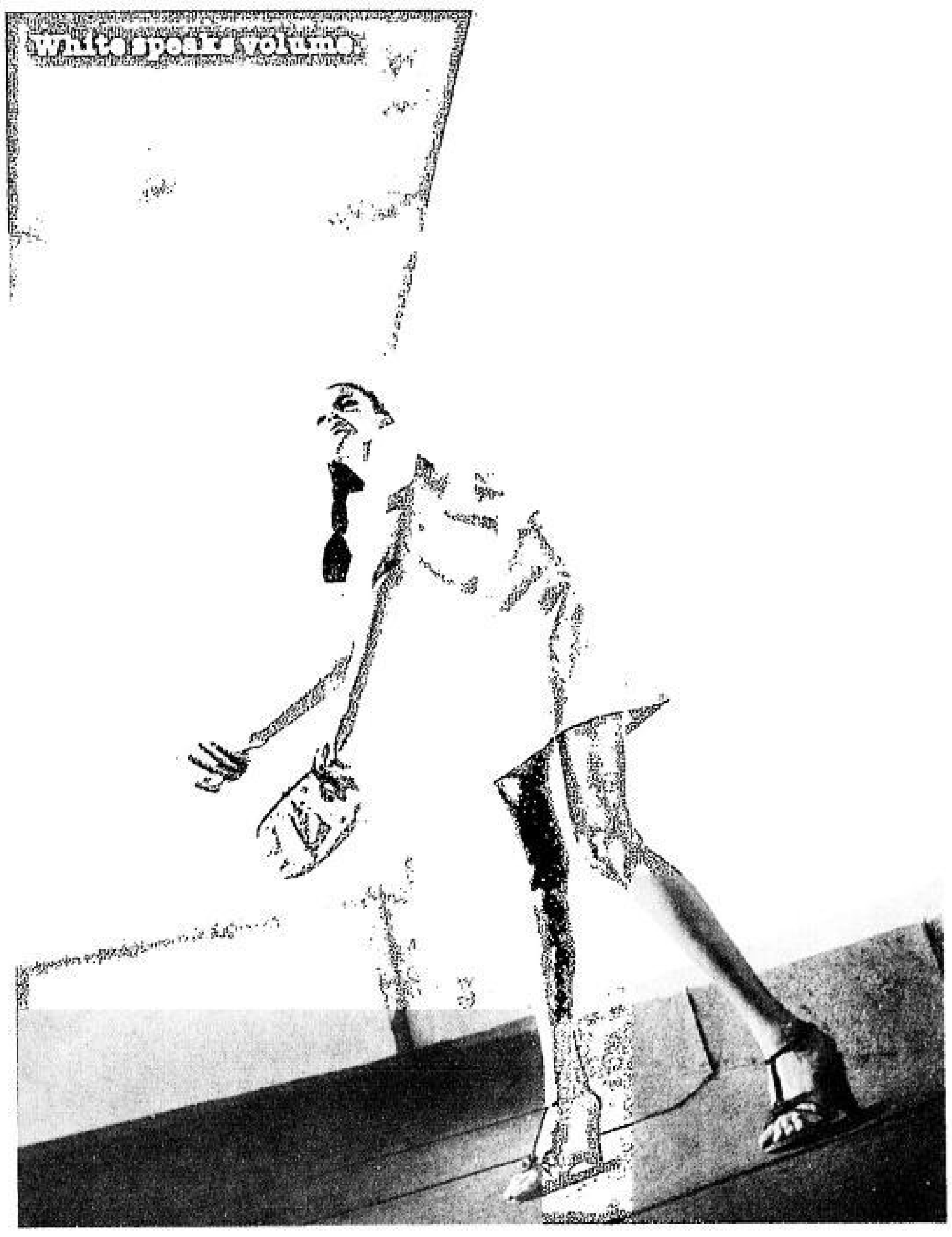


I see the light.



White speaks volume.

LWD

Make space in your closet for the Little White Dress

From page C1

A little style tip: Since white acts as a canvas, whatever color you use as an accent is where your eyes will go. So if you want to accentuate your face, a colorful lapel or necklace will do the trick.

If you have a small waistline, wear a bold-colored belt. Like a painter's canvas, the little white dress is your blank space that you can easily personalize with your choice of accessories (try jelly bean-colored shoes and bags).

The LWD, like its black and red counterparts, has evolved today into a variety of styles such that wearing one now is a far cry from becoming a fashion faux pas.

Given that, who says you have to follow that old saying "you can't wear white after Labor Day?"

Updated styles

The must-have styles today are modern cuts for an updated look. Choose dresses that are above the knee, draped or with clean lines. Voluminous styles also add a touch of femininity.

One white-hot designer who is in tune with the modern style is Debbie Co (cell. 0917-8334476). Her celebrity clientele includes Gretchen Barretto, Angel Aquino, Cheska Garcia and KC Concepcion.

In fact, Co is becoming such a household name that every time I visit her atelier, I bump into a friend, a celebrity, office workers, debutantes or brides-to-be. This just means that women of all shapes, lifestyles and wallet space love her designs!

Debbie Co took up Fashion Design in 2004 at LaSalle International. She then went to Central Saint Martins in London in June 2005 to take up intensive fashion design courses.

Before she left, she had her pieces consigned in Ishq, Souk and Solea, under the brand After Eight.

When she came home in November 2005, The Ramp in Crossings Shangri-La Mall started carrying After Eight.

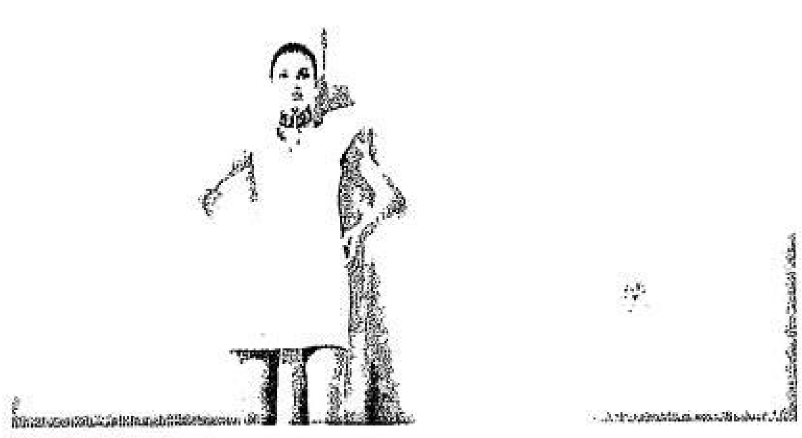
It was also around that time when she was able to get shop space in Jupiter Place in Makati.

Atelier Debbie Co is her first shop, which opened late in February 2006.

On this spread, the spotlight is on Debbie Co's modern take on the little white dress, Schu's metallic hot steppers and the luxurious Louis Vuitton accessories.

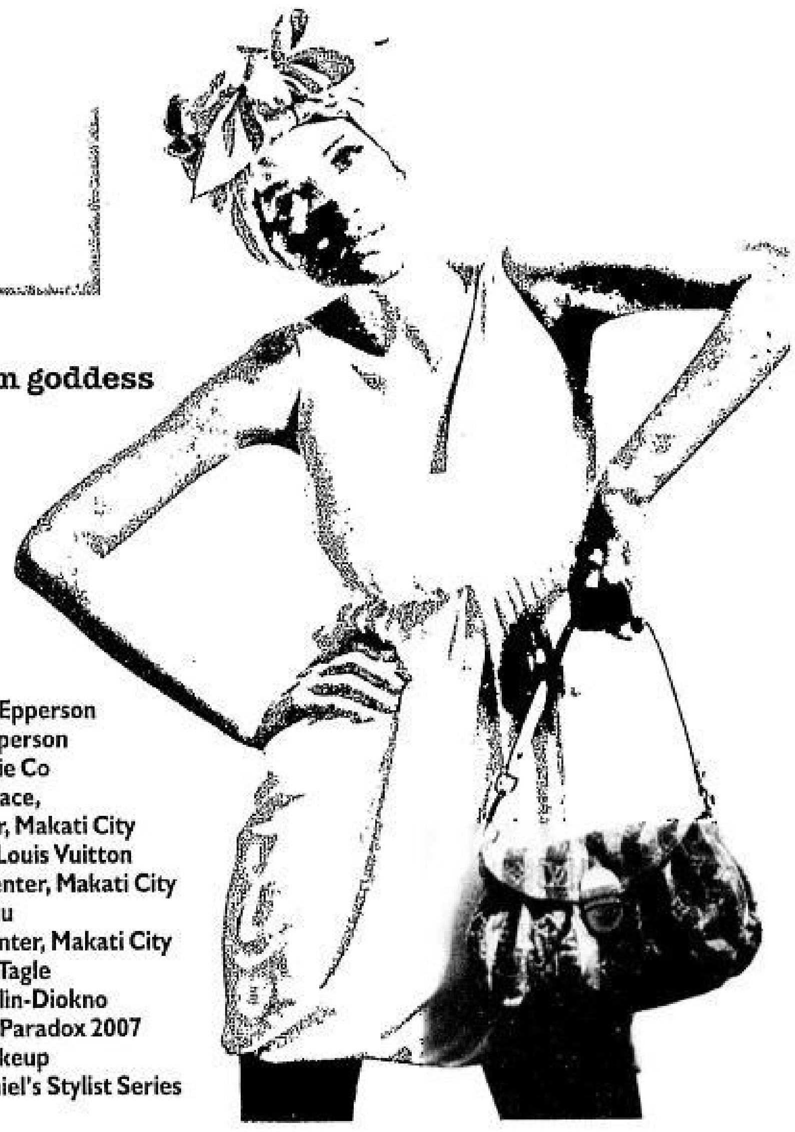
The word is out—the little white dress is now officially big. It's about time we started seeing white!

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph



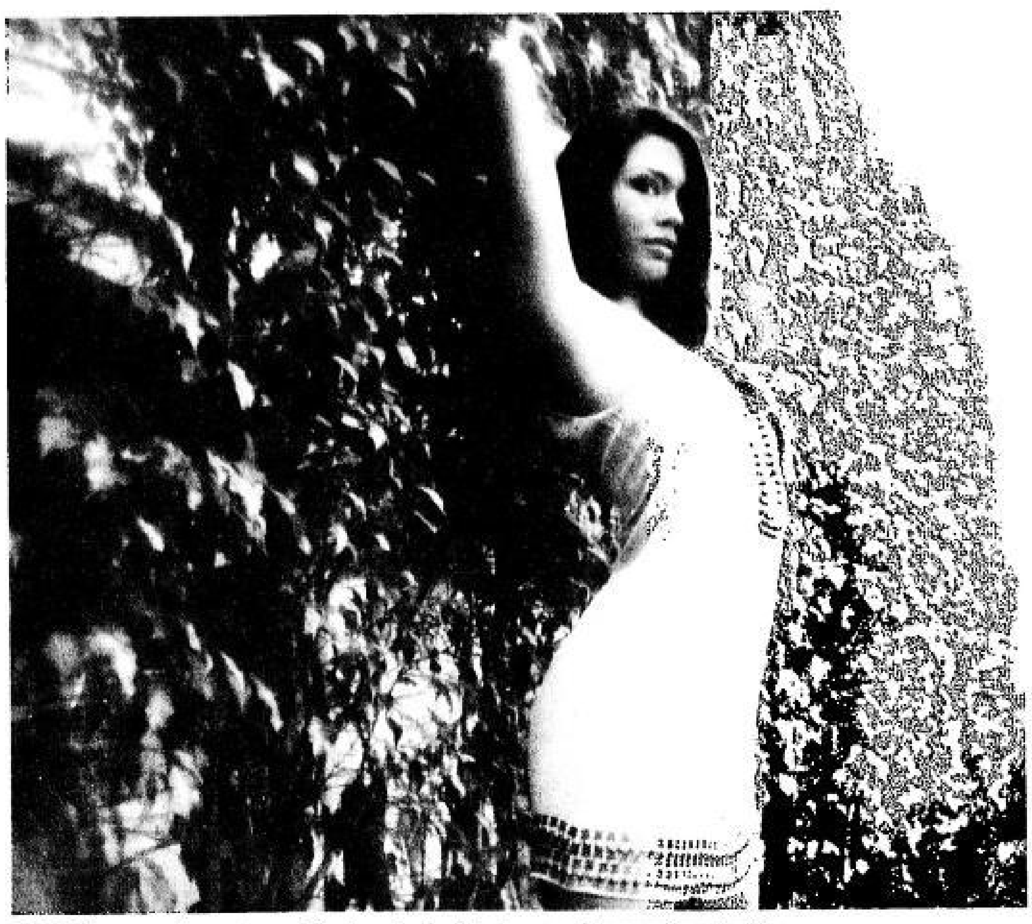
Canvas corner

Sitting pretty



Urban goddess

Photography Tom Epperson
Styling Jenni Epperson
Clothes Debbie Co
2/F Jupiter Place,
136 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati City
Bags and accessories Louis Vuitton
G/F, Greenbelt 4, Ayala Center, Makati City
Shoes Schu
G/F, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati City
Model Grace Tagle
Makeup Claire Seelin-Diokno
for Shu Uemura using Paradox 2007
S/S Mode Makeup
Hair Rick Diokno using Khiel's Stylist Series



STRIKE a pose in a retro white beaded mini dress and a sexy brown 'do.

COMPLEMENT rich brown hair with an easy-to-wear nude slip dress and chunky jewelry.

Brown beauty

From page C4

olutionary micro-active conditioning formula that's made of nutri-protein vitamin E and shine protectors that illuminate colored hair from within through a three-step system—Step 1: shampoo to illuminate color tones; Step 2: condition to nourish colored hair for extra shine; Step 3: leave-on to seal in the shine all day long.

Needless to say, a woman's crowning glory definitely livens up any outfit. So, let your fabulous brown hair down to get that exotic, earthy style that's extra hot this coming season!

The range of Sunsilk Colour Shine System is available in three variants to address different popular hair colors: radiant light brown, dazzling shiny black and vibrant burgundy.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

MATCH a modern black-and-blue dress that has chocolate ruffled accents, with elegant brown tresses for an interesting study in contrasts.

Photography Victor Consunji
Styling Pam Quiñones
Hair and makeup Sir George Salon (Mary Pauline Group)
Model Mona Lisa of Look Models Philippines

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Brown beauty

KEEP white spaghetti-strap dress and belt simple and sexy with alluring brown locks.

GO for an ethereal mood with shiny brown tresses, a skin-tone chiffon spaghetti-strap dress and basic jewelry.

KEEP it casual with a peasant halter-top paired with white shorts and a silky yet carefree hairdo.

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

THIS COMING FASHION season, go for a look that's natural and exotic with the use of soft earthy hues and nude tones—not just in your choice of clothes, but in your skin and hair color, too!

Play with soft palettes of vanilla, caramel and chocolate that are perfect for lazy summer days. Beam in brown as you don pieces with light and feminine details. Mix and match with rich shades of chestnut and cinnamon that flatter Asian complexions and provide a radiant glow.

To complement your choice of hue, why not get a tan and color your hair? How you wear your hair and opt to color your skin are fashionable statements, after all. If the rage last season was deep black hair and a milky complexion, this summer is definitely about golden skin and warm, brown hair.

As you embrace your naturally radiant new look, not to mention new hair color, add dazzling shine to your colored tresses with the first-ever color-enhancing hair-care range from Sunsilk Colour Shine System.

The revolutionary Sunsilk Colour Shine System is specially formulated to take care of color-treated hair the right way. It adds vibrance and shine while nourishing and protecting colored hair from the damaging effects of some colorant chemicals, without adding or depositing color.

Sunsilk Colour Shine System also has a rev-

BROWN/ C3

bench/

Wear Your Conscience

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
JUN DE LEON

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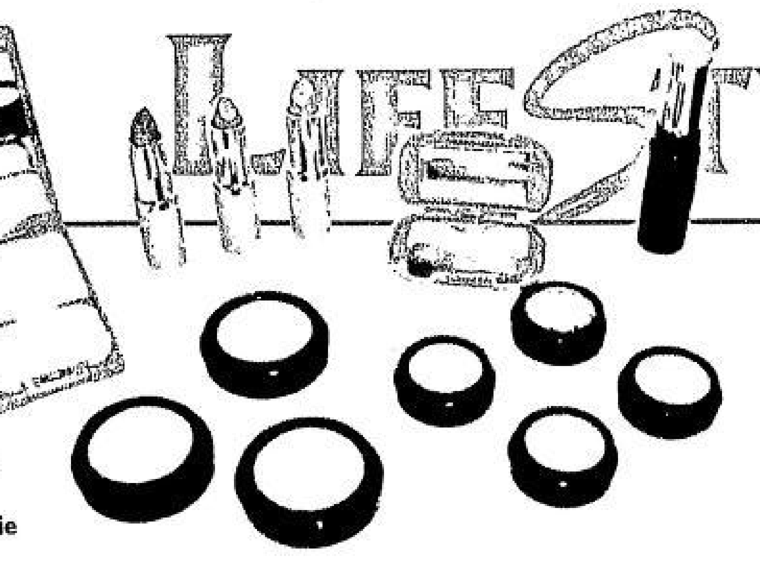
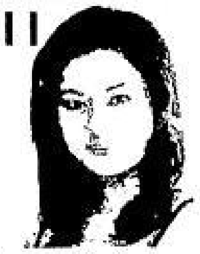


BLOOMING cosmetics formulated for very sensitive skin. Lipstick in center is Frosted Pink (P350), very similar to Chanel's Brown Sugar in shade and texture. Dual wet/dry powder foundation in Ivorie and Blush in Real Pink

Reasonably priced beauty clones

MAKEOVER 911



Kinny Salas

THE FEATURED PRODUCTS ARE NOT necessarily dirt cheap but they are a bargain compared to the originals I fell in love with that are: a) costing me too much; b) not locally available so I have to order them abroad; or worse, c) have since been discontinued, which is driving me insane.

After the holidays, most women console themselves by buying something that make them feel pretty, like a tube of lipstick which they can carry around for a quick pick-me-up.

Avon Beyond Color Plumping Lipcolor SPF 15 (P420)—This contains retinol which removes dry dead skin and hydrates targeted area, thus eliminating dry lines and giving the skin area a plumper line-free appearance. The SPF 15 protects lips and the creamy matte texture ensures lots of pigment with staying power, while the retinol prevents chapping.

I was sent three shades during Christmas. Although I was sold on the formula, I fell in love with only one shade—Burgundy. It's a replica of Lancôme's Matte Mauve lipstick that I used to wear daily during the early '90s but has disappeared since. I can only describe the shade as crushed burgundy rose petal or Benefit's Benetint turned creamy matte.

The other two shades I tried are Chili (too bright orange-red) and Party Pink (loud bright pink). I will request for more shades and will let you know.

Call 8642900 for Metro Manila residents or toll free 1-888-2866 anywhere in the Philippines. E-mail helpdesk.ph@avon.com.

New discovery—Everything in the **Blooming makeup** range costs P350, but the packaging is very similar to Clinique's green celadon and MAC so it does not look cheap. The main asset is that everything was formulated by a dermatologist who collaborated with a chemist to create the entire line.

Dr. Mary Ann Abesamis formulated the eye shadows, foundations (stick and dual), pressed powders, blush and lipsticks for herself and patients who suffered from asthma of the skin. The shades were very limited but I was pleased with the ones I found a match with.

The Dual (wet/dry) foundation keeps oil at bay and offers flawless coverage when wet; it gives a sheer natural finish. The pressed powder has SPF 15.

There are only three shades of lipstick which are all beige or brown-based, so they would blend with most skin tones.

The one that caught my eye was Frosted Pink which, when applied, looked and felt like Chanel's Brown Sugar—a glossy brown shimmer with red undertones. Instead of smelling like rose petals like Chanel, it had a vanilla scent and it kept my lips moisturized long after the color was gone. It can only be bought at the Blooming Skin & Cosmetic Surgery Center at 30 Timog Avenue, QC (tel. 3765433 or 4141659).

Yummy but non-fattening—It stays almost forever on the lips but will not enlarge hips! **The Face Shop's Delicious Lip Gloss** gives lips a sheer wash of color as it contains more pigment than the usual gloss. It also contains Saran-wrap sexy shine, making lips look fuller and eliminating all lip dryness. It only costs P95 and is flavored.

My favorites are: 13 Blueberry-flavored (a lavender shade that gives lips a natural pink tint); 06 Milk Caramel-flavored (an Angelina Jolie nude beige type that makes lips look a lot fuller because of the shade and shimmer plus it tastes like my favorite coffee); 07 Cocoa-flavored (a brown-based pink with golden shimmer an enhances nude lip shade and tastes like rich hot chocolate).

Want chocolate on your body as well? Try **The Face Shop's Cacao extract Sweet Body Exfoliator and Cleanser** at P525 each. They smell like the real thing and leave my skin silky smooth.

The scent wafts through my bathroom for hours after the shower and it comforts me to no end.

When I diet, I always struggle with my chocolate and sweets addiction, and I have found that smelling chocolate, coffee and vanilla in high amounts stops me from grabbing the real thing and shoving it in my mouth.

The Sweet body line has Body Oil (P615), Body Cream (P525) and Moisturizing Body Spray (P445) for those who really want the smell to last. (But I opt not to use the latter unless my skin gets very dry or the weather gets pretty cold.)

These items can be found in The Face Shop boutiques at Glorietta and SM Mall of Asia.

E-mail kinnysalas@yahoo.com

THE FACE Shop Sweet Body Exfoliator and Cleanser

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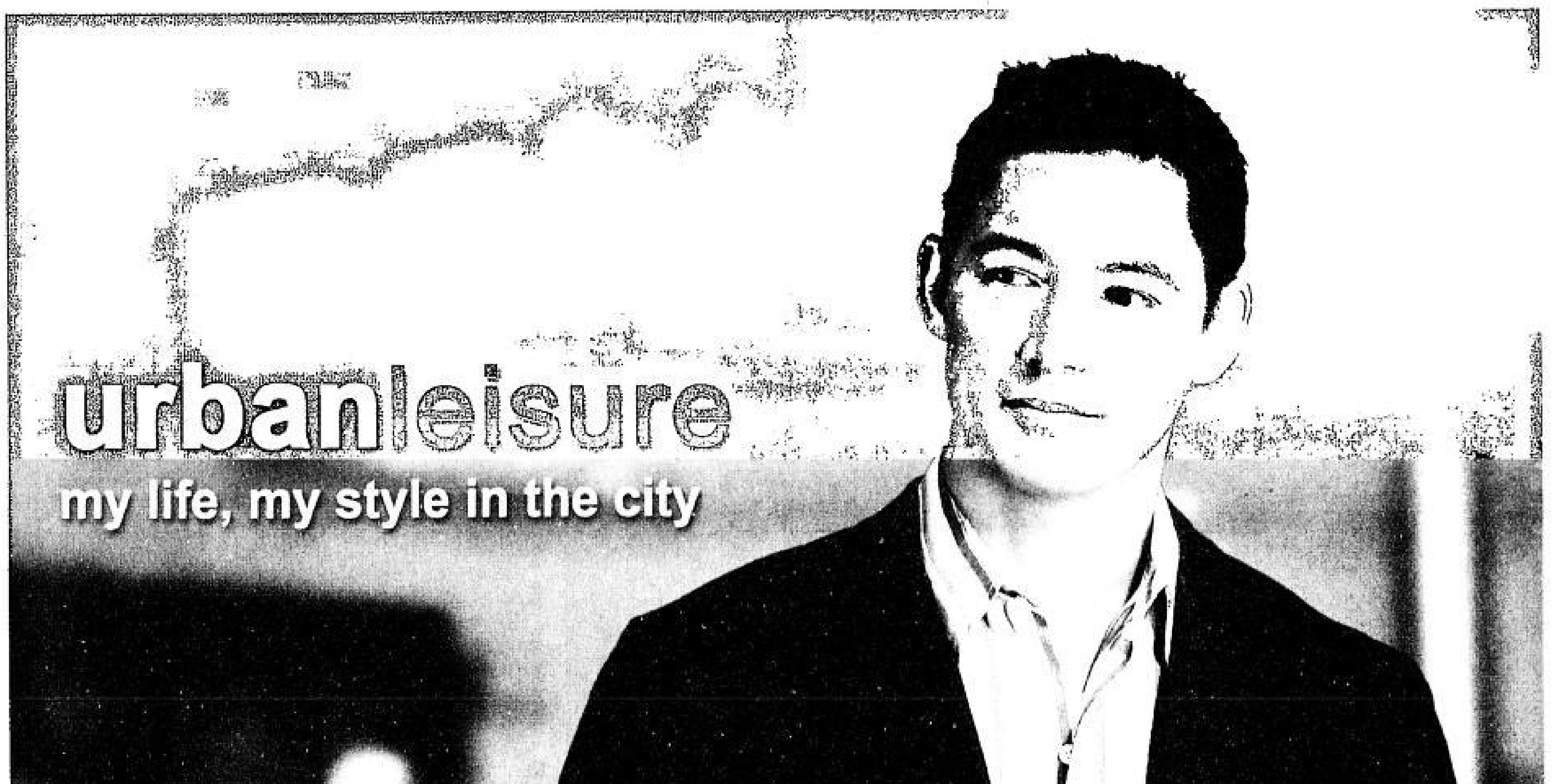
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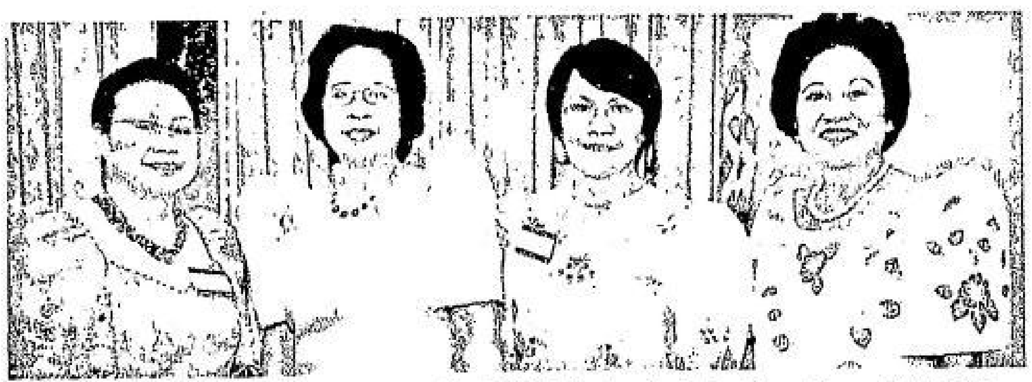
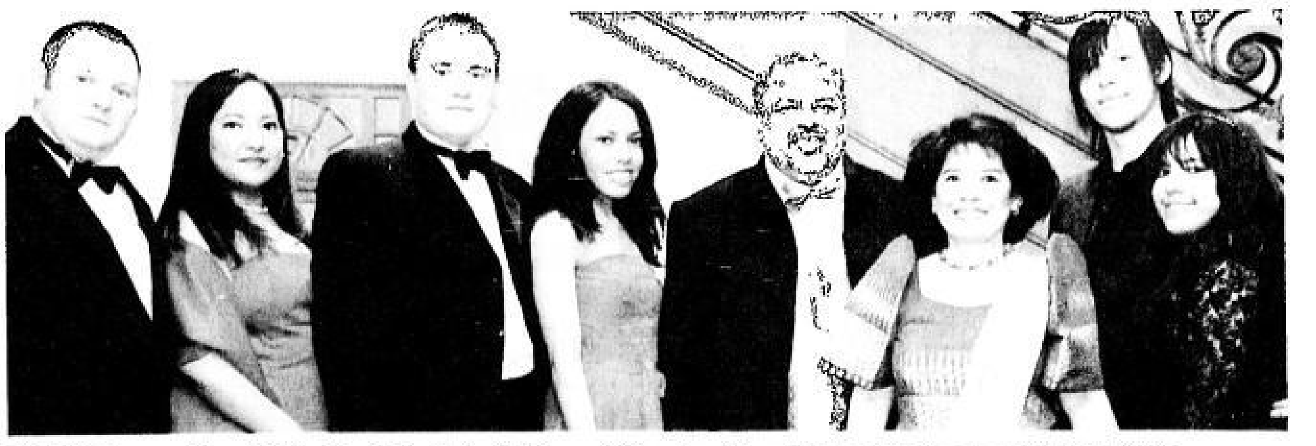

EDNA Kim, FWA-UK chair; Marina Castillo, FWA-UK vice chair; Dr. Remy Reyes, FWA-UK honorary vice president; and Elsie Sebastian, Woldingham Catholic Girls Boarding School chaplain


TERRY Conway; Dona Pinto; Chris Zerdzinski; Alana, Michael and Imee Pinto; Rob Cope; and Gemma Pinto

UK-based Pinays do country proud

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

ALL ROADS THAT DAY LED TO the tres chic Café Royal Hotel at 68 Regent Street in London, where the 18th anniversary celebration of the Filipino Women's Association of United Kingdom (FWA-UK) took place at the elegant Empire Napoleon ballroom, dahlings.

Our two adorable hostesses—Mindanao-born **Clarita Richardson**, an urban planner and consultant of the Chartered Town Planner in London, and Dumaguete-born jeweler **Nanie Perez**, FWA-UK assistant treasurer, picked us up at the Royal Garden Hotel at Kensington High Street in London, where we were billeted. We arrived promptly on time for cocktails at the foyer of the hotel before the sit-down dinner at the ballroom.

"It (FWA-UK) is no longer a newborn organization but a full-fledged, tried-and-tested association for its transparency and consistency in its aims and goals," said Richardson.

Richardson, vice-president of FWA-UK, explained to *moi* during the excellently prepared six-course dinner that the club was founded in April 1988 by a core group of Filipino movers and shakers, women living and working in the UK, and that the best years of FWA-UK was led by none other than that internationally renowned socialite and charity worker, **Angeles "Nene" Quimson** (widow of the late ambassador to the Court of St. James, **Juan T. Quimson**). She was assisted by then Consul **Mindy Cruz**.

FWA-UK is a nonpolitical, nonsectarian, and nongovernmental organization "established to project a balanced image of Filipino women that will emphasize their important contribution to society both in the UK and in the Philippines," Richardson said.

"It is an active member of the Women's Council of Great Britain and maintains close association and cooperation with other London-based Filipino groups."

The membership increased under the first chair, Dr. **Remy Reyes**, now one of the six honorary vice presidents of the association. Five other former chairs are **Nenita David-Garrad**, **Loline Reed**, **Wylma Regala**, **Barbara Solon** and Richardson.

The executive committee is the policy-making level of the association.

A charity-driven association, FWA-UK is led by **Edna Kim**, who relentlessly strives for an all-member participation in all meetings, while focusing on charity commitments and members' personal development, *palanggas*.

FWA-UK's 18 years has helped the Southeast Asian Institute of the Deaf and Create Responsive Infants by Sharing (Cribs), which looks after abandoned babies and abused mothers in the Philippines.

This big-hearted organization also sends school materials to the Calauag Elementary School in Quezon. It has built a health center in Sta. Rosa, Mulanay, also in Quezon. The center became operational two years ago and received 500 pounds for the purchase of its first stock of medicine for the poor.

FWA-UK concentrates its fundraising efforts to help disadvantaged but deserving high-school students. As of the last count, nine high-school students have graduated and a blind scholar has just finished his piano tutorship.

Of the nine scholars, three are now fully employed. The rest are enrolled in universities. In addition, FWA-UK has received recommendations for four high-school/vocational students from the Grants Committee of the Erda Tech Foundation Inc. The four may be granted a five-year full scholarship.

Erda Tech offers a five-year high-school education program which prepares poor but deserving youth for a better life, giving them opportunities to finish high school while learning employable skills. It started in 1993.

The hopes of all of these children have been raised because of generous hearts who help make their dreams come true.

"FWA-UK is deeply grateful to its roster of benefactors, donors, friends, families and well-wishers for making this annual charity fundraising event always a success. Do join us again this year, in making a child's dream come true and to wish the FWA-UK a happy 19th year," said Richardson.

Après the opening remarks of Edna Kim, the chair, Ambasador to the Court of St. James **Edgardo Espiritu** gave his remarks. He was with his wife, madame **Lydia Baskinas Espiritu**, a patron of the organization.

Later, the Lahing Kayumanggi Dance Troupe performed the exotic *singkil*, *palanggas*. There were also fabulous door prizes.

For the finale of the program, a plaque of appreciation was presented to Nene Quimson for her "tireless involvement" and continued participation in the FWA-UK activities.

Then it was time to rock to the sound of the No Rezerve band. And when those Brits hit the dance floor with their Filipina spouses, you'd think there was no tomorrow, dahlings.

At 1 a.m., Nene and I excused ourselves and we headed back to our hotel in her chic Rolls Royce. She dropped us off there on her way back to her new country home in Sussex.

The following day, we were able to watch the fabulous musical, "The Lion King," finally! We had been trying for several years to catch the show whenever we were in New York, but somehow all tickets would be sold out on the days we wanted to watch it, *palanggas*.

Then, with a heavy heart it was time to say "Adios!" to our fantastic hostesses, Clarita and Nanie. It had been a glorious and fun five days in London, one of my favorite cities in Europe. But before leaving, both ladies assured me, "You'll be back," as I waved goodbye to them at London's Gatewick Airport.

LETTY Agustin in an Aureo Alonzo Terno

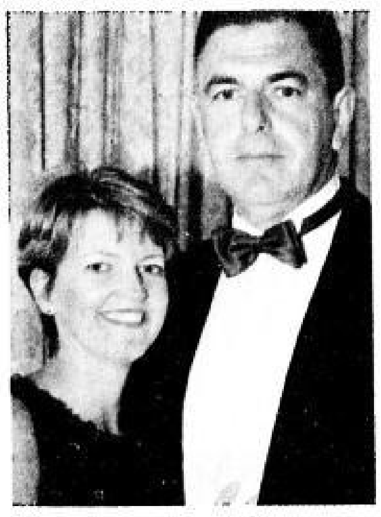
FIDES Herrera Lim and First Secretary and Consul Leo Herrera Lim

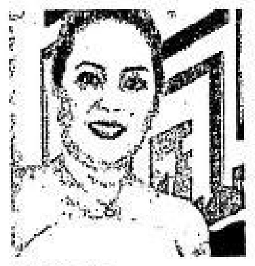
PHILIPPINE Ambassador to the Court of St. James Edgardo Espiritu and wife Lydia B. Espiritu

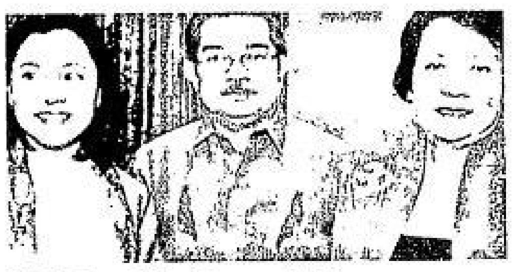
HANDSOME Adrian and mother Maria Milky Jardine

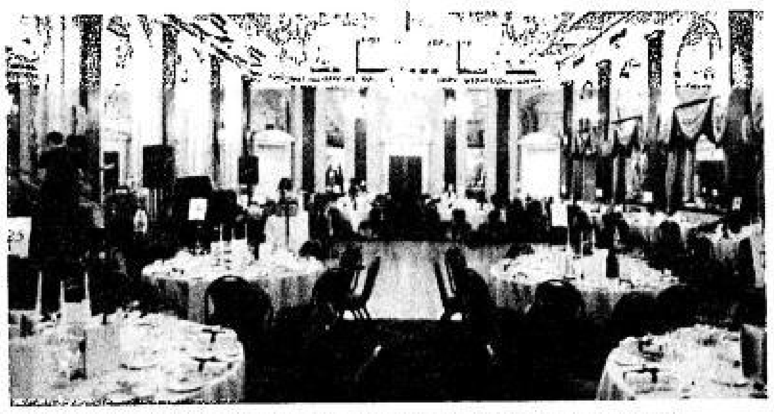
PAUL Bullock and Ruby Adrias

JANE and Alan Gibbs


LIZ and Brian Mansbridge


BONG Forouzan, gown designed by Edna Encarnacion

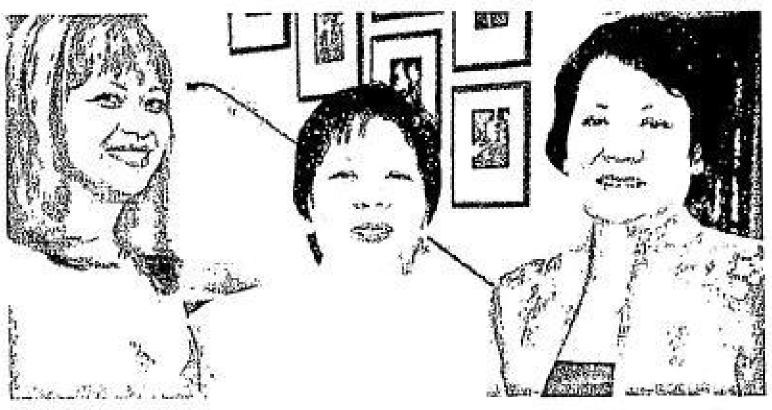

VICE Consul Tess Lazaro; Ed Maranan, information officer of Philippine Embassy; and Linda Guzman, Cultural Attaché


THE ELEGANT Empire Napoleon grand ballroom of the Royal Garden Hotel

JET-SETTER Meg Nolasco Brewer and Maurice Arcache (as in *moi*)

THE LAHING Kayumanggi dance troupe after their exotic *singkil* dance number, with Ronnie del Bario as artistic director

OUR ADORABLE hostesses in London. Clarita Richardson, honorary FWA-UK vice president; and Nanie Perez, executive committee and community affairs assistant treasurer, in a Judith Pajaro terno.


JEANETTE Thomson, author of the book "Join Me in My Journey"; Judy Cacho; and Linda Guzman

LOLINE Reed and Richardson present to Nene Quimson a plaque of appreciation for her continued support of the FWA-UK organization.

PAUL Buckley, Harvey Farri, Liza Legaspi, Brett Lyons and wife Millie L.

ELVIE and Vic Philips; with Linda and Andy Kelly

INTERNATIONAL socialite based in London Gurley Payne; Nanie Perez; Patrick and Nancy Cunniff

Has it been 40 years?

GOINGS-ON

LAST CALL FOR HIGH-SCHOOL graduates of St. Joseph's Academy-La Consolacion Caloocan batch '67 to join the Ruby Anniversary Homecoming Jan. 28 at Makati Shangri-La hotel. Mass will be said at 4 p.m. to be followed at 5 p.m. by registration. Starting 5:30 p.m. "rubylarians" may have their glamour shots taken. The photos will be used as centerfold of the 40th anniversary souvenir book. Program proper will start at 6 p.m. with a live band for dancing after dinner which will be served at 7:30 p.m. An outing to Punta Fuega in Tali, Batangas, is also on the schedule for the Batch of '67. Details will be available upon registration. Call 0917-8868950 or 0919-4739815.

ANNIVERSARY. The Manila Seedling Bank Foundation Environment Center will celebrate its 30th anniversary with a series of environmental, educational and livelihood activities. Foundation president and general manager Chito Bertol said the celebration would begin with the garden and landscape exhibit of the Philippine Horticultural Society Feb. 2-13 at the complex. The society is putting up a special booth showcasing the Philippines' indigenous forest trees distributed by MSBF for the greening of Metro Manila and many provinces. The MSBF Environment Center is a nonstock, nonprofit, nongovernment organization. The environment center is open daily, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Call 9247001-02, 9240166.

CHEAPER CALLS. Sun Cellular is offering a lower IDD rate of 20 US cents per minute for Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman until Jan. 31. Subscribers automatically enjoy this promotional rate when making calls to these countries. The Sun IDD Top 10 program lets subscribers make calls to the United States, China, Hong Kong, Canada, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, Guam and Macau for only 10 US cents per minute. To avail of the service, postpaid subscribers should enroll their accounts by visiting any Sun Shop or dialing 200 on their mobile phone. Prepaid subscribers may avail of this service by purchasing Sun IDD Top 10 call cards or via e-Pin purchase, SMS purchase, Xpress Load or by accessing The Mall on their Sun Cellular phones. For more information, log on to www.suncellular.com.ph, call 3958000, dial 200 from your Sun phone, or visit any Sun Shop.

SEMINARS. CFS Creative Training and Management will be holding the following seminars: Effective Supervisory Skills, Feb. 3, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Effective Business Communication (writing, speaking and presentation skills), Feb. 6-7, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Purchasing Management, Feb. 8, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Financial Analysis for Account Officers, Feb. 9, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Win-Win Negotiation Skills, Feb. 22-23, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. E-mail cfsctm2001@yahoo.com.ph or call 8697960, 8232358, 8234825.

BROADWAY AUDITION. Atlantis Productions is holding auditions for the Broadway musical "Avenue Q," which will have its Manila premiere in August. Auditions will be held Feb. 20, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., at G/F, Oppen Building, 349 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City. Sign-up begins 10:30 am. Those interested must prepare a musical theater song (16 bars only), and bring a piano score or minus one, and a current photo. "Avenue Q" will be directed by Bobby Garcia and Chari Arespacochaga. It opens in Meralco Theater Aug. 17. Contact Atlantis Productions at 8927078.

BAND TILT. Calling all amateur bands with four to seven members (male and female), 16 years old and above. Join The Brick Road's "Hits Remake Band Competition." Repertoire must be original Pilipino music (English and Tagalog) from '70s to present. Entry forms are available at Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall's Ad & Promo Department. Attach a photocopy of members' birth certificates or valid IDs with birth date and 3R group photo. Elimination round starts Feb. 17. Grand finals will be on the Brick Road's sixth anniversary celebration April 28. Call 681-5401 loc. 118.

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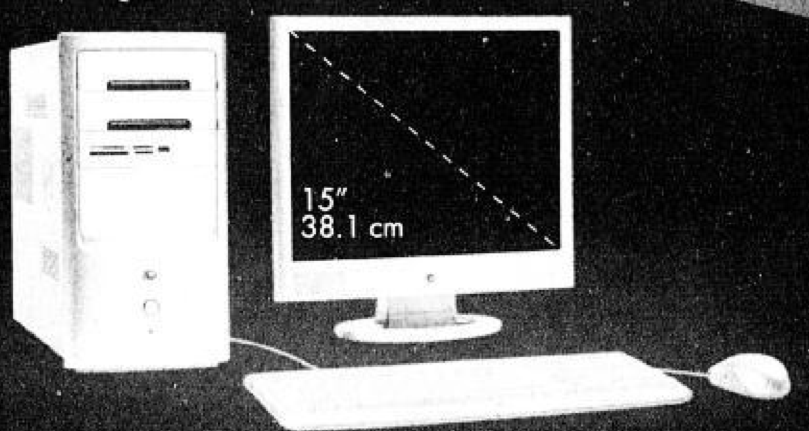

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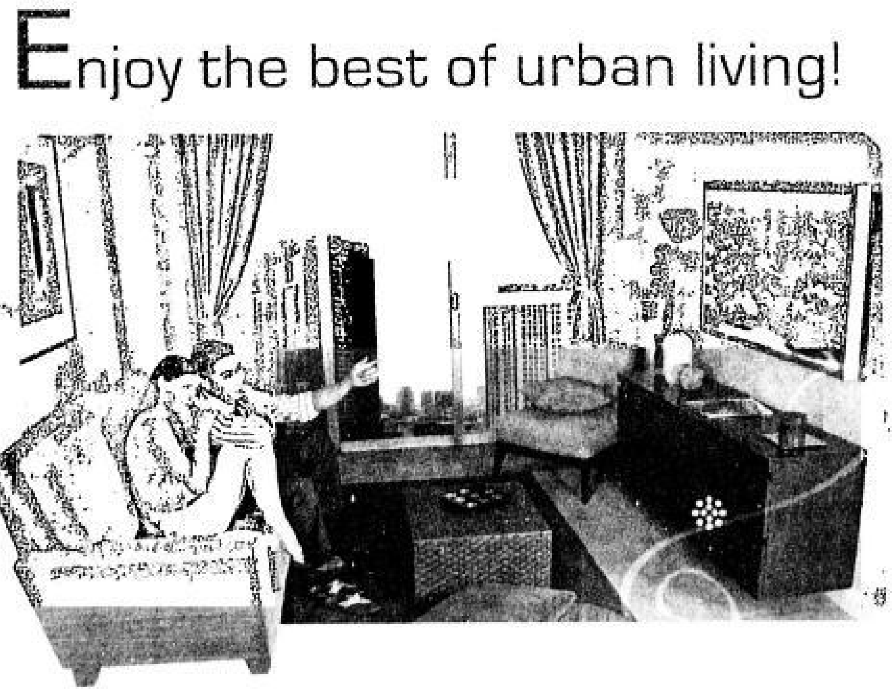

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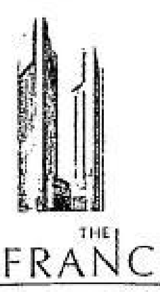

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Jaeger-LeCoultre's Reverso watch has a new look

REVERSO Squadra Hometime Stainless lets you know if its a.m. or p.m. even in the second time zone.

CHRONO function with world time in Squadra World Chrono

JAEGER-LECOULTRE, KNOWN for its elegant Reverso watches, has revealed a 75-year-old secret.

With just a simple flip, a new face of the Reverso is revealed. The new face is the latest in a long trail of incarnations for the watch. There have been jeweled, enameled and monogrammed versions.

The classic Reverso has always been housed in a rectangular case, in elegant Art Deco.

Now, Jaeger-LeCoultre reveals the classic Reverso's brother: the Reverso Squadra.

The Squadra is very modern in its square case. Its proportions are perfect for modern men. It also boasts of a second time zone.

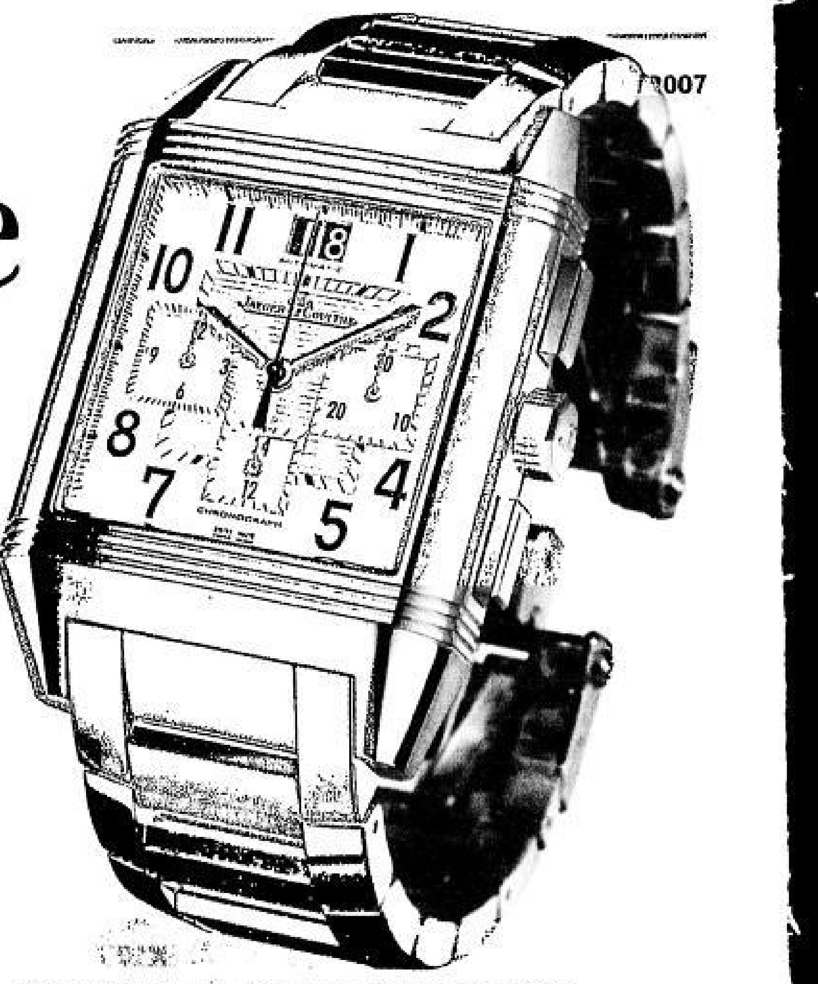
The Squadra is available in three versions: Reverso Squadra Hometime, Reverso Squadra Chronograph GMT and Reverso Squadra World Chronograph.

The Reverso Squadra Hometime makes it easy to tell time on one's preferred time zone, while easily keeping track of a second time zone. It even lets one know if it is morning or afternoon in the second time zone.

The Reverso Squadra Chronograph GMT features a chronograph function good for sports.

The Reverso Squadra World Chronograph combines the chronograph function in front and the world time at the back.

Jaeger-LeCoultre Watches are available at Lucerne in Glorietta 4 and Shangri-La Plaza; and at Chronos in Power Plant Mall and SM Megamall.



PINK-GOLD Reverson Squadra Chronograph GMT

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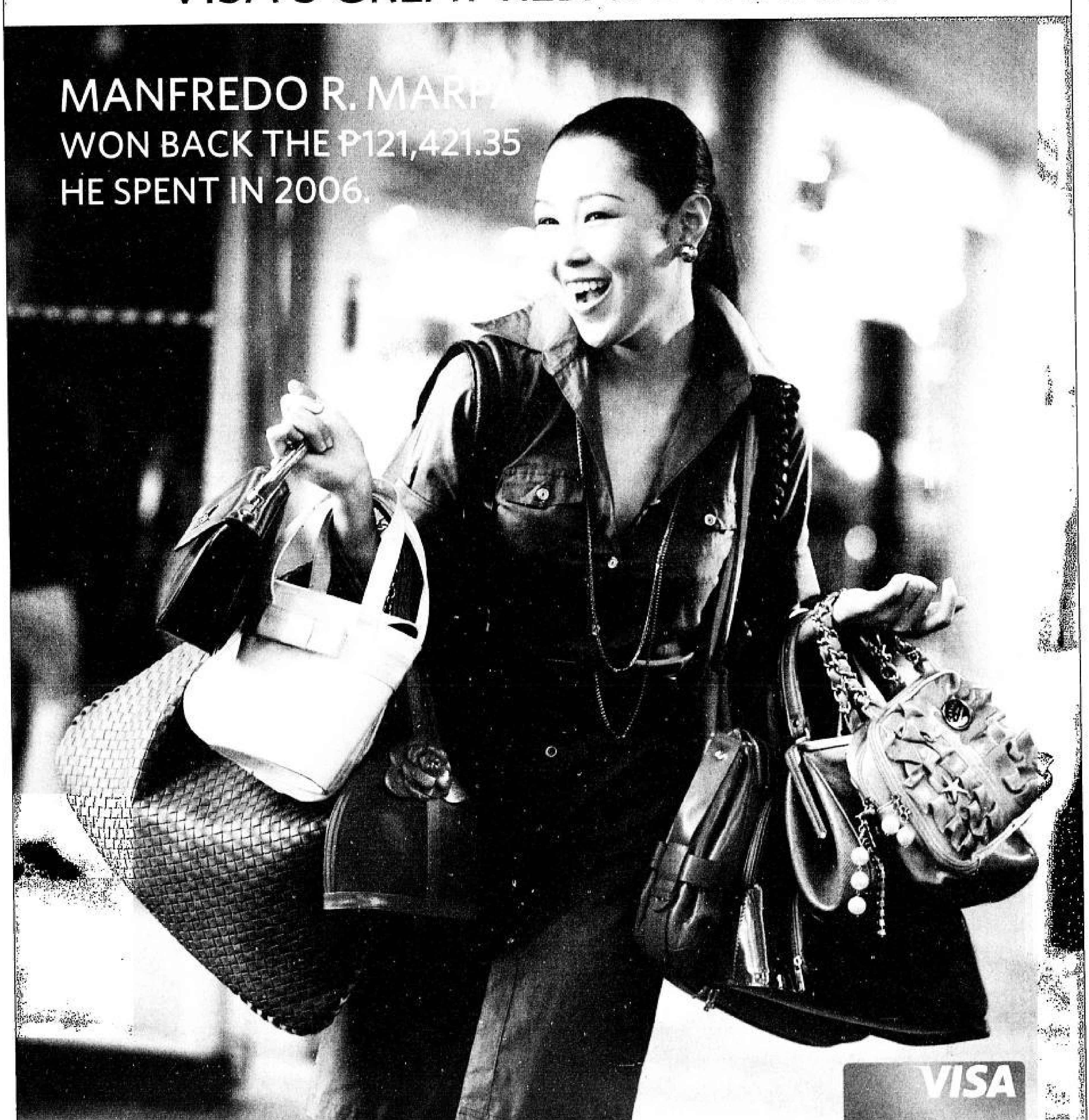

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2007

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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A leisurely Sunday brunch with the stars in Sundance

YES, readers, that's your columnist pointing at Peter Sarsgaard. Also in photo are director Mike White (left), and actors Josh Pais and Molly Shannon. PHOTO BY MUNAWAR HOSAIN

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

PARK CITY, UTAH—"I AM BASICALLY PETER Gyllenhaal," quipped actor **Peter Sarsgaard**, laughing, when we told him about our goof with his last name in our column last week.

We had Sunday brunch with actress Maggie Gyllenhaal's fiancé along, with his director **Mike White**, cast mates **Molly Shannon, Regina King** and **Josh Pais**. Peter stars in "Year of the Dog," one of the films we like so far in this Sundance festival. Mike, who wrote "School of Rock" and previous Sundance favorites "The Good Girl" (with **Jennifer Aniston**) and "Chuck and Buck," makes his directorial debut with "Year of the Dog."

Over omelets, coffee and champagne at Hotel Park City, we talked about the film, which drew laughs and tears when it premiered at a packed Eccles Theatre on Saturday evening. Peter joked about seeing himself in shorts as a dog trainer. Regina, who won awards and nominations as **Ray Charles'** lover in "Ray," said she enjoyed playing a non-serious role, for a change.

We predict breakthrough success for Molly, who was a regular on "Saturday Night Live," and Josh, who is in another Sundance film that's packing in crowds, "Teeth." Mike, a fan of Molly's comedic talents, penned the lead role, a sweet, single secretary who goes overboard with her love for dogs, for her. To think that Molly is allergic to dogs. "I get slight skin irritation on the face," she told us.

When we asked Josh who he based his character on (as Molly's boss, he is one of the delights of this offbeat comedy), he said with a sly grin, "Mike White." In "Teeth," about a high school student whose vagina has chompers, Josh portrays the gynecologist who has the misfortune of learning, first-hand, that unusual feature in this girl. "Vagina Dentata!" he screams in pain the Greek myth about the female organ having teeth.

We found out later that Josh is the son of the late Prof. **Abraham Pais**, physicist and biographer of no less than **Albert Einstein**.

Nervous Auraeus

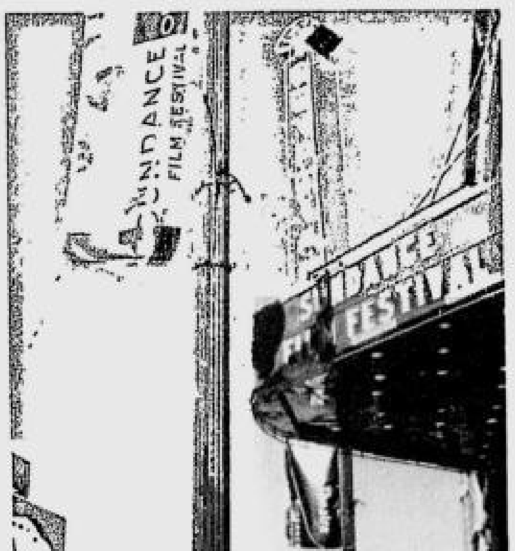
When we arrived Thursday last week, we bumped right away into **Auraeus Solito** at the festival headquarters. The trailblazing filmmaker introduced us to his partner of seven years, **Endi "Hai" Balbuena**. We also met **Jimmy Flores**, scriptwriter of "Tuli," Auraeus' second ticket to this film fest haven for indies.

Friday morning, we watched "Chicago 10," which opened the fest the previous evening. A documentary, "Chicago 10" is about the anti-Vietnam war protests at the 1968 Democratic National Convention and the ensuing circus of a trial of the eight figures (**Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, Tom Hayden**, among others) who led the demonstrations. "Chicago 10's" opener status stressed festival founder **Robert Redford's** wish to widen the audience for documentaries.

Then we rushed to the Egyptian Theatre for "Tuli's" first screening. When Auraeus arrived, in a fitted red piña barong by **John Abul**, Mangyan and Palawano necklaces and black leather pants, we showed him the long line waiting to get in. The film's prime screening times and venues and the good-sized crowds for "Tuli" are a testament to Auraeus' growing reputation in the indie film circuit since he entered "The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros" in competition here last year.

Before the screening, we saw Auraeus scampering down the stairs to the toilet.. "*Kinakabahan ako*," he said. Once inside the theater, Auraeus, Jimmy and Endi (as production

A LEISURELY/ E2



AURAEUS, "Tuli" scriptwriter Jimmy Flores and production manager Endi "Hai" Balbuena in front of Egyptian Theatre. RUBEN V. NEPALES

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 DEJA VU • THX
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

3 indieSine's Digital Cinema
Bagong Agos Film Festival

4 BABEL
1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00

5 LITTLE CHILDREN
1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00

6 ERAGON
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

7 AGENT X44
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 SAW 3 12:00 2:20 4:40
BLOOD DIAMOND 7:00 10:00

9 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
12:40 2:55 5:10 7:25 9:40

10 ROB-B-HOOD
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

2 ROB-B-HOOD 12:00 2:50
SAW 3 5.20 7:35 9:50

3 BABEL
12.00 2.30 5:00 7:30 10:00

4 DEJA VU
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

5 LITTLE CHILDREN
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 AGENT X44
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

7 BLOOD DIAMOND 12:00 2:40
ERAGON 5:30 7:45 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 ROB-B-HOOD
1:10 3:40 6:20 9:00

2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
1:15 3:50 6:25 9:00

3 AGENT X44
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

4 DEJA VU
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00

5 SAW 3
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

6 LITTLE CHILDREN
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

7 ERAGON
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

8 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3228-30

1 DEJA VU
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 AGENT X44
4 SAW 3

PIONEER 687-5378

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
1:15 3:45 6:15 8.40

2 BABEL
11:40 2:30 5.20 8:10

3 AGENT X44
1:40 4:00 6:20 8:40

4 LITTLE CHILDREN
11:40 2:30 5:20 8:10

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Set in the minefields of modern suburbia, this film follows several inhabitants of a small American town as they fumble their way through adulthood. Numb-to-life housewife and mother Sarah Pierce (Kate Winslet) finds an outlet for her yearning in gorgeous househusband Brad Adamson (Patrick Wilson), who is crippled with insecurity over the fact that his perfect wife, Kathy (Jennifer Connely) is the family breadwinner.

When Sarah and Brad meet at the local playground one afternoon, a passionate affair is sparked. In a further attempt to reclaim his youthful fire, Brad joins a night football league with Larry Hedges (Noah Emmerich), a former cop who has begun to harass a convicted sex offender, Ronnie J. McGorvey (Jackie Earle Haley). The troubled lives eventually collide, causing each individual to take full responsibility for their not-so-responsible actions. It is bitingly funny and nakedly honest, critique of middle class dysfunction.

For Screening Schedule, please contact our Cinema Access: 635-5555 or visit us: www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

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Little Children
Kate Winslet Jennifer Connelly Patrick Wilson

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 SAW 3
4 KAMASUTRA 3
5 AGENT X44

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 ZU WARRIORS
2 AGENT X44
3 A GOOD YEAR
4 SPIRIT TRAP
5 SAW 3

DASMARIÑAS (046) 862-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 AGENT X44
2 KAMASUTRA 3
3 SAW 3
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X44
3 KAMASUTRA 3
4 A GOOD YEAR

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 474-8188

1 DEJA VU
2 SAW 3
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 AGENT X44

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

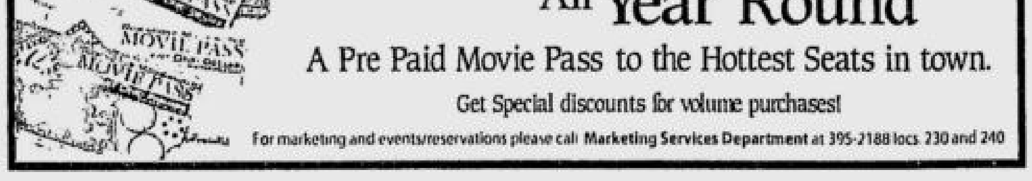
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 KAMASUTRA 3
3 AGENT X44
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 SAW 3
6 A GOOD YEAR

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
3 AGENT X44
4 DEJA VU
5 BORAT
6 SAW 3

ILOILO (033) 338-8070

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X44
3 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
4 DEJA VU
5 BORAT
6 SAW 3



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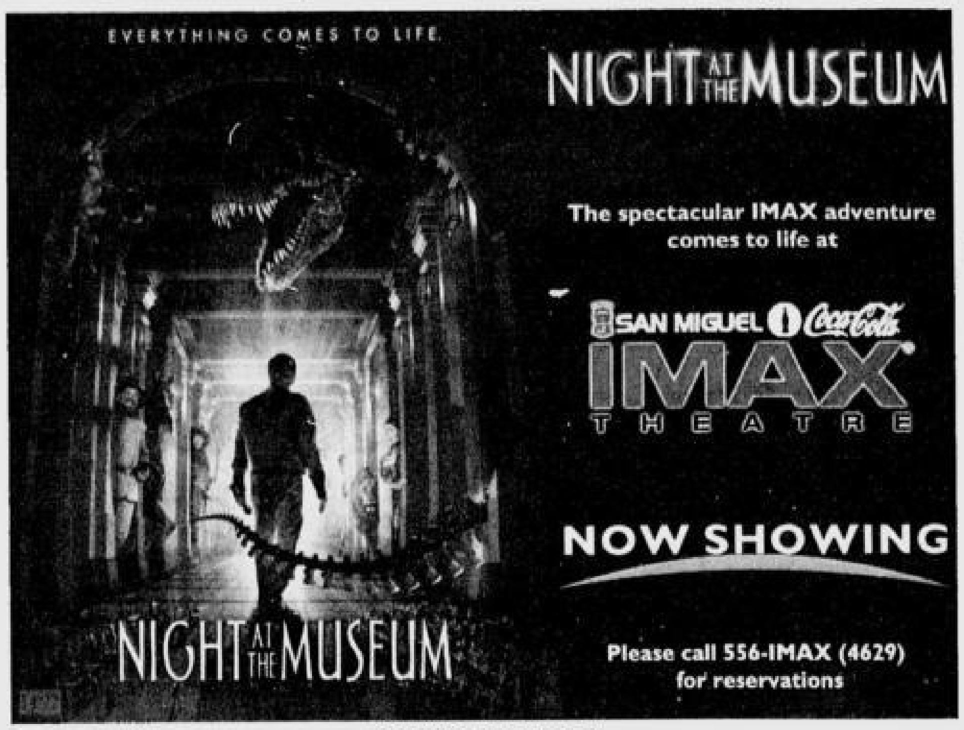

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1 DEJA VU
2 BLOOD DIAMOND
3 BABEL
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
6 ERAGON

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1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 BABEL
5 DEJA VU
6 BABEL
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
8 AGENT X44
9 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
10 ROB-B-HOOD
11 ERAGON
12 BLOOD DIAMOND

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 BABEL
2 DEJA VU
3 ERAGON
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 AGENT X44
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
7 BLOOD DIAMOND
8 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
9 AGENT X44
10 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
11 ROB-B-HOOD
12 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 DEJA VU
5 ERAGON
6 AGENT X44
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
8 ROB-B-HOOD
9 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
10 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
11 BLOOD DIAMOND
12 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ERAGON
3 AGENT X44
4 GRIDIRON GANG
5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
6 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
7 DEJA VU
8 ROB-B-HOOD
9 BLOOD DIAMOND
10 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 DEJA VU
3 ERAGON
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
6 AGENT X44

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X44
3 DEJA VU
4 BABEL
5 ERAGON
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
7 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
8 ROB-B-HOOD
9 BLOOD DIAMOND

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
3 AGENT X44
4 ERAGON

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 DEJA VU
3 BABEL
4 ERAGON
5 ROB-B-HOOD
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
8 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
9 AGENT X44
10 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
11 BLOOD DIAMOND
12 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4373201-04

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 DEJA VU
3 AGENT X44
4 SPIRIT TRAP

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 ERAGON
3 AGENT X44
4 DEJA VU

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 ERAGON
2 AGENT X44
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

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2 ERAGON
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 DEJA VU
6 AGENT X44
7 ROB-B-HOOD
8 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 DEJA VU
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 A GOOD YEAR
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 AGENT X44
6 TANECIOUS D

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
2 AGENT X44
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 A GOOD YEAR
2 AGENT X44
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 A GOOD YEAR
3 AGENT X44
4 SHAOLIN VS EVIL DEAD
5 ROB-B-HOOD
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM CIY LIPA (043) 756-7925

1 A GOOD YEAR
2 ZU WARRIORS
3 AGENT X44
4 SPIRIT TRAP

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 AGENT X44
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 SPIRIT TRAP
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

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1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 ERAGON
4 AGENT X44

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1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X44
3 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
4 ERAGON

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1 ERAGON
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 AGENT X44

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1 DEJA VU
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 ERAGON
4 BLOOD DIAMOND
5 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
7 AGENT X44
8 SHAOLIN VS EVIL DEAD

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1 SHAOLIN VS EVIL DEAD
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 RESERVED
4 AGENT X44
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
6 ERAGON
7 RESERVED
8 DEJA VU

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1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 DECK THE HALLS
3 AGENT X44
4 ZU WARRIORS
5 ERAGON
6 DEJA VU

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1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
3 AGENT X44
4 DEJA VU

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Leisurely Sunday brunch

From page E1

manager) were introduced to the large, predominantly white audience.

The film, Auraeus' imagination of a Philippine countryside rife with spirituality, magical rituals and sexually adventurous and liberated women, was applauded when it ended. Auraeus and Jimmy hopped onstage for the Q&A with the audience, a great feature of this festival.

Why an "X"?

As the duo alternately answered questions, we wondered, why was this film rated "X" in the Philippines? Jimmy, still amazed that he was in Sundance, answered us outside the theater after the Q&A. He said the X rating was basically due to two scenes: when the two lead actresses (**Desiree del Valle** and **Vanna Garcia**) kissed, and when the character of **Carlo Aquino**, portraying Jesus in a Lent passion play, was tagged as uncircumcised. Those are grounds for a restrictive rating?

Marie-France Arcilla, whom we earlier interviewed in New York for her Off-Broadway musical "Shout!," surprised us with a hello. Still sporting a tan from Boracay, Marie-France had come straight from her vacation in the Philippines to do interviews for her weekly TV show, "Cinema AZN"—aired on the AZN Network, a cable channel focusing on the Asian and Asian-American film scene.

In the evening, we survived the slippery path (icy sidewalks are a career hazard in covering this snowbound city) to the Eccles Theatre for the premiere of **Philip Seymour Hoffman** and **Laura Linney**'s "The Savages." With Philip and Laura seated right behind us, we satisfied our curiosity about what kind of scenes would make two of today's best thespians—playing siblings suddenly forced to care for their father—laugh.

First snowfall

On Saturday, it snowed for the first time since we arrived, adding to the white stuff already blanketing this mountain-side ski paradise. It was appropriate for the day's first film, "Snow Angels," a drama starring **Sam Rockwell** and **Kate Beckinsale** (both good) dealing with their split and Michael Angarano (appealing) as a high school boy coping with his parents' separation.

With all this dark fare, "Teeth," about a girl who finds that she is anatomically very unique, filled a press screening room for the first time. The movie was fittingly preceded by "Songbird," a short about a cruel meat butcher who gets his just comeuppance.

Directed by **Mitchell Lichten-**

A LEISURELY/ E4

More turn-offs in local show biz

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ENtertainment audience share no-no's that turn them off in local show biz and media:

Singing stars who "make *birit*." They do this to please their audience and to show off their "incredible" vocal range, but frankly, only dogs and puppies are impressed.

Instead of screaming and screeching, singers should focus more on interpretation, emotion, vocal variety and contrast—in other words, aspects of musical performance that *really* matter.

Child singers and actors who behave like pint-sized adults and perform songs with lyrics that speak of love and lust. Their mentors and directors should give them the time and space to be children, before the cynical show biz world does its worst with them.

Even more distressingly, child performers' "adult" portrayals make other children think that it's "cute" and "*porma*" to go that unenlightened and cynical route—and everybody is negatively affected.

"Actors" who can't act their way out of a paper bag. This might sound like a contradiction, but more incompetent actors are now crawling out of the woodwork due to local show business' current emphasis on youth.

Alas, many of the callow new talents who infest our screens these days lack training and talent, and simply get by on looks and connections.

Is this any way to run an entertainment industry? Please desist—and insist on talent and training above all else.

Starlets who heat up their careers with self-serving scandals and concocted controversies. We see them all over the show biz talk shows, crying, acting up, and hitting and screaming at each other in order to perversely enjoy their 15 seconds of fame.

The starlets' ploys are either phoney or weird, so they shouldn't merit anybody's attention—but the show biz talk shows feature them to generate perverse viewership. Unfortunately, ga-ga viewers are also sucked into the perversity, and their values are all the worse for it.

"Talents" who sleep their way to the top. They star in TV shows, albums and concerts despite their obvious lack of "K," because their wealthy "patrons" (read: sugar daddies or mommies) have the wherewithal to foist them on an unsuspecting public.

Some of the "sponsored talents" even go by far-out titles like Incredibly Beautiful Singing Sweetheart of the Entire Universe—well, they can dream, can't they?

Subjective and whimsical judges of TV talent tilts. They snugly shift their focus and adjust their standards to suit their caprices every step of the way, not realizing that their subjective actuations irritate viewers and compel them to stop viewing the shows that are so poorly and whimsically adjudicated. Who's the loser now?

Contestants in TV tilts who are forced to vote each other out. The idea here is to come up with winners who know how to work with others and don't turn them off. In actuality, however, "empowered" contestants use their voting power for personal reasons, and even to eliminate particularly strong rivals.

This has got to stop, because the system has been grievously compromised. Also, most of the tilts' contestants are teenagers, and young people shouldn't be encouraged to be so cynical and vindictive.

'The Glass Menagerie'

MORE performances of Tennessee Williams' "The Glass Menagerie" are scheduled on Jan. 25-27, Feb. 1-3 and 8-10. Call 426-6001, local 5121. The play is directed by Ricky Abad and stars Laurice Guillen, Ina and Ana Feleo, Arnold Reyes and Randy Villarama alternating as the Gentleman Caller and Ronan Capinding and Jake de Leon alternating as Tom.

'Wali'

"WALI—The Fun Way to ABC"—is the perfect video for young learners. It includes skits, songs and other features enlivened by Wali, the friendly *alitaptap* and his pals—Sikiting the Cat, Wanda the Fish, D the Dog, and Bamboy the Pig, plus Sarah Geronimo in a special appearance. Distributed by Viva Video.

'Eraserheads: Anthology 2"

BRING back the glory days of the top alternative band Eraserheads with its two-disc "Anthology 2" compilation, featuring new singles like "Tindahan ni Aling Nena," "Shirley," "Shake Your Head," "Hey Jay," "Alkohol," "Sa Wakas" and "Spoliarium."

It could be you

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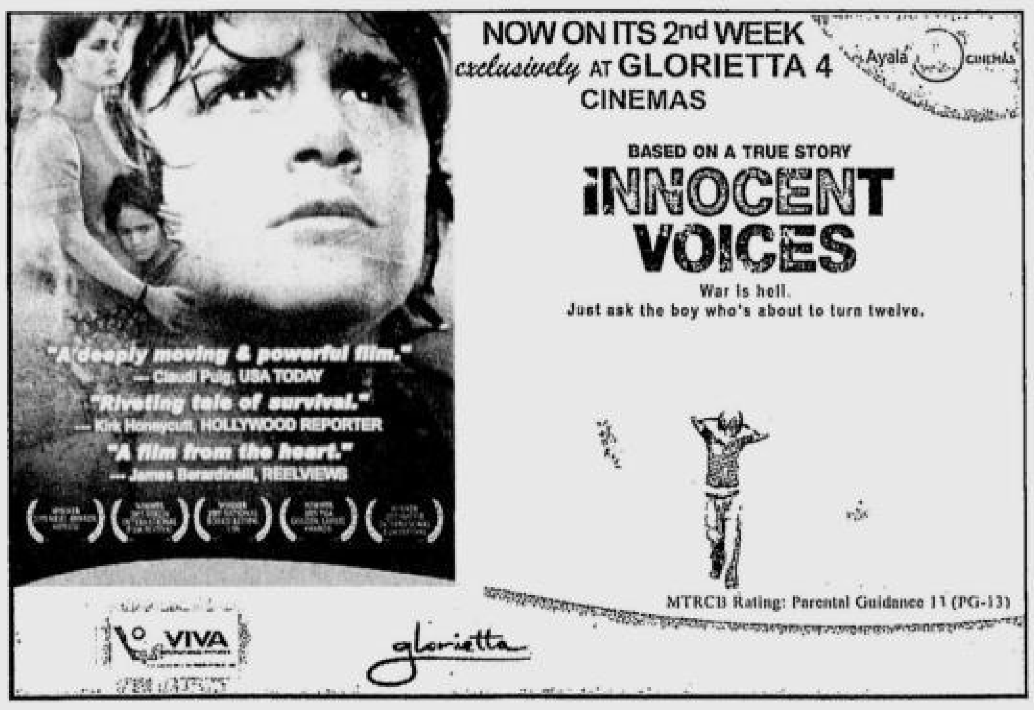
A global search is on for the next great Hollywood director.

"On The Lot," a brainchild of reality TV pioneer Mark Burnett and filmmaker Steven Spielberg, is a new show that will pit 16 aspiring filmmakers against each other, their fates determined by a weekly vote.

Interested filmmakers may submit their film entry before Feb. 16.

Submission details are available at http://startv.com/onthelot.

The reality search starts airing on Star Movies in May.



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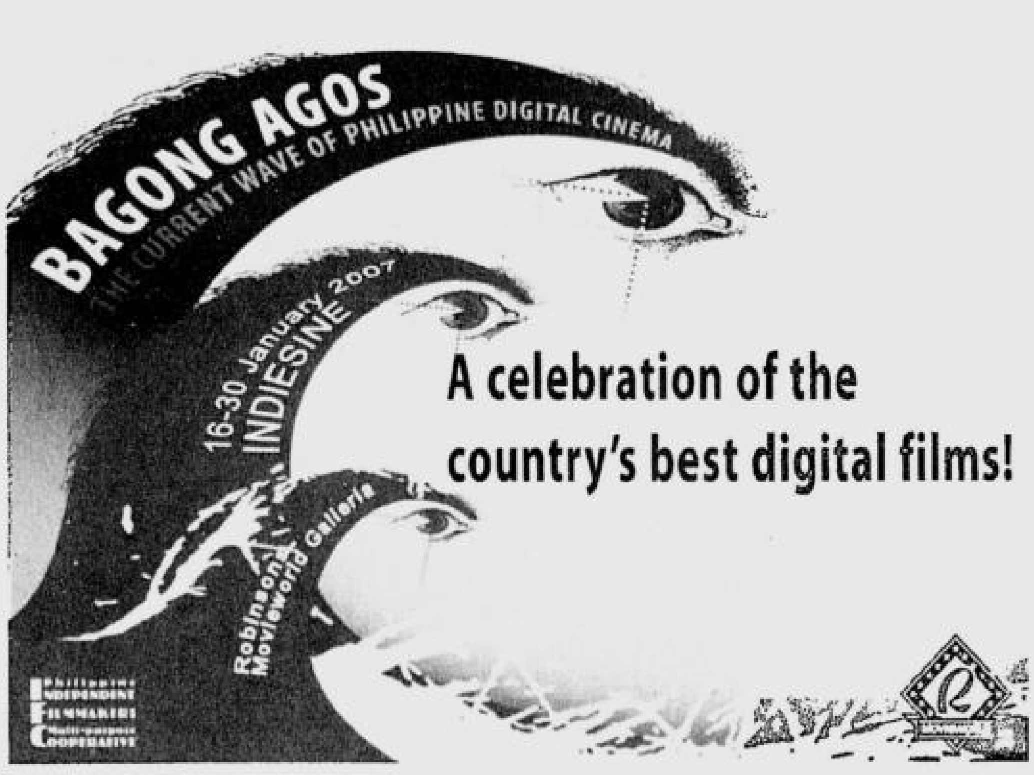

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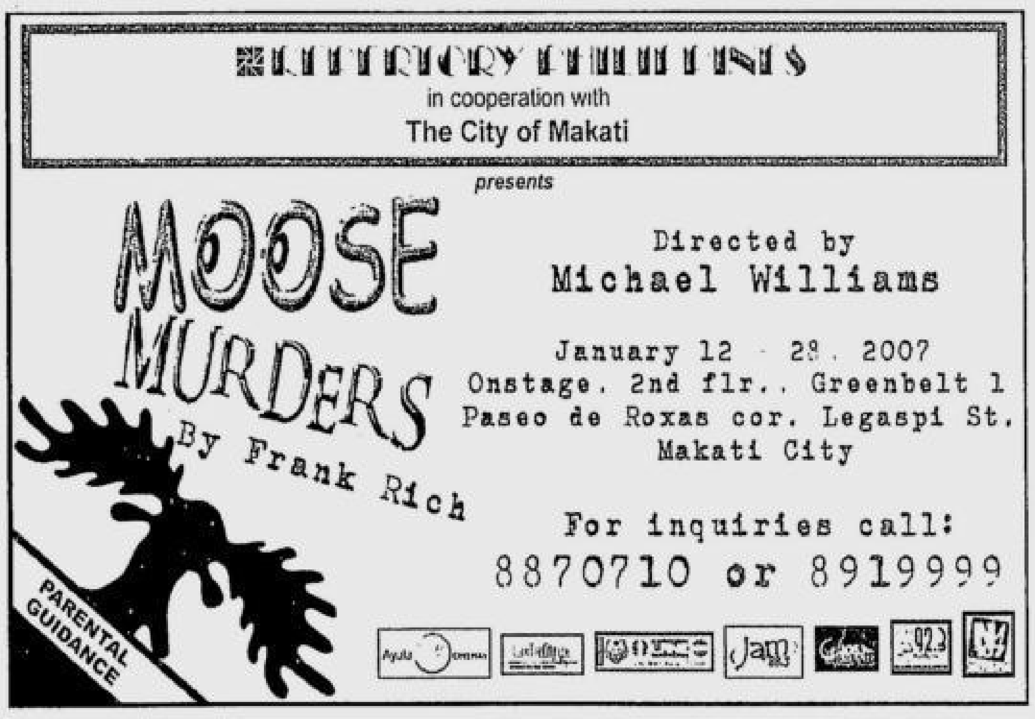

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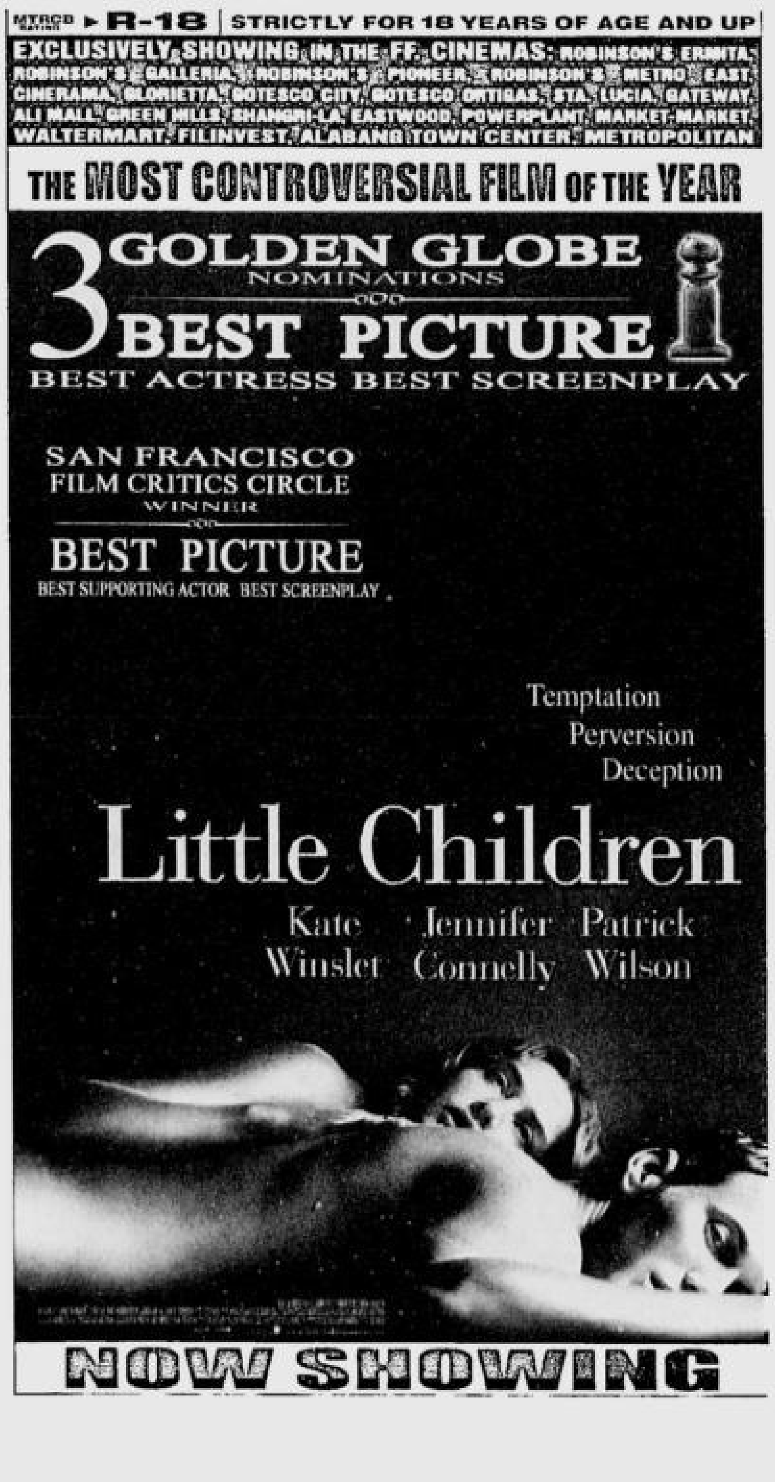

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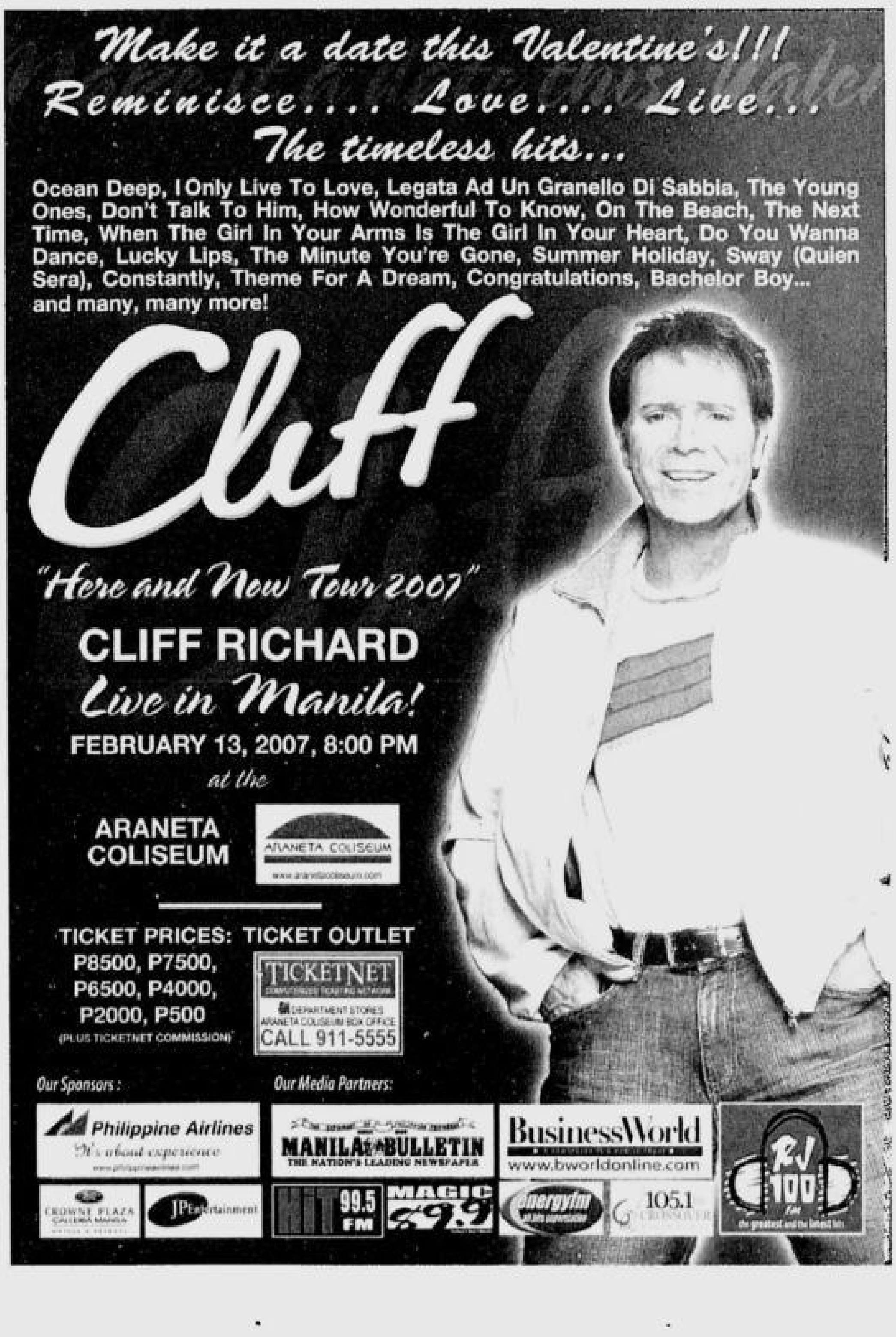

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8 LITTLE CHILDREN
9 KASAL KASALI KASALO
10 AGENT X 44

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2 DÉJÀ VU

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2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
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2 AGENT X 44
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2 ERAGON

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5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

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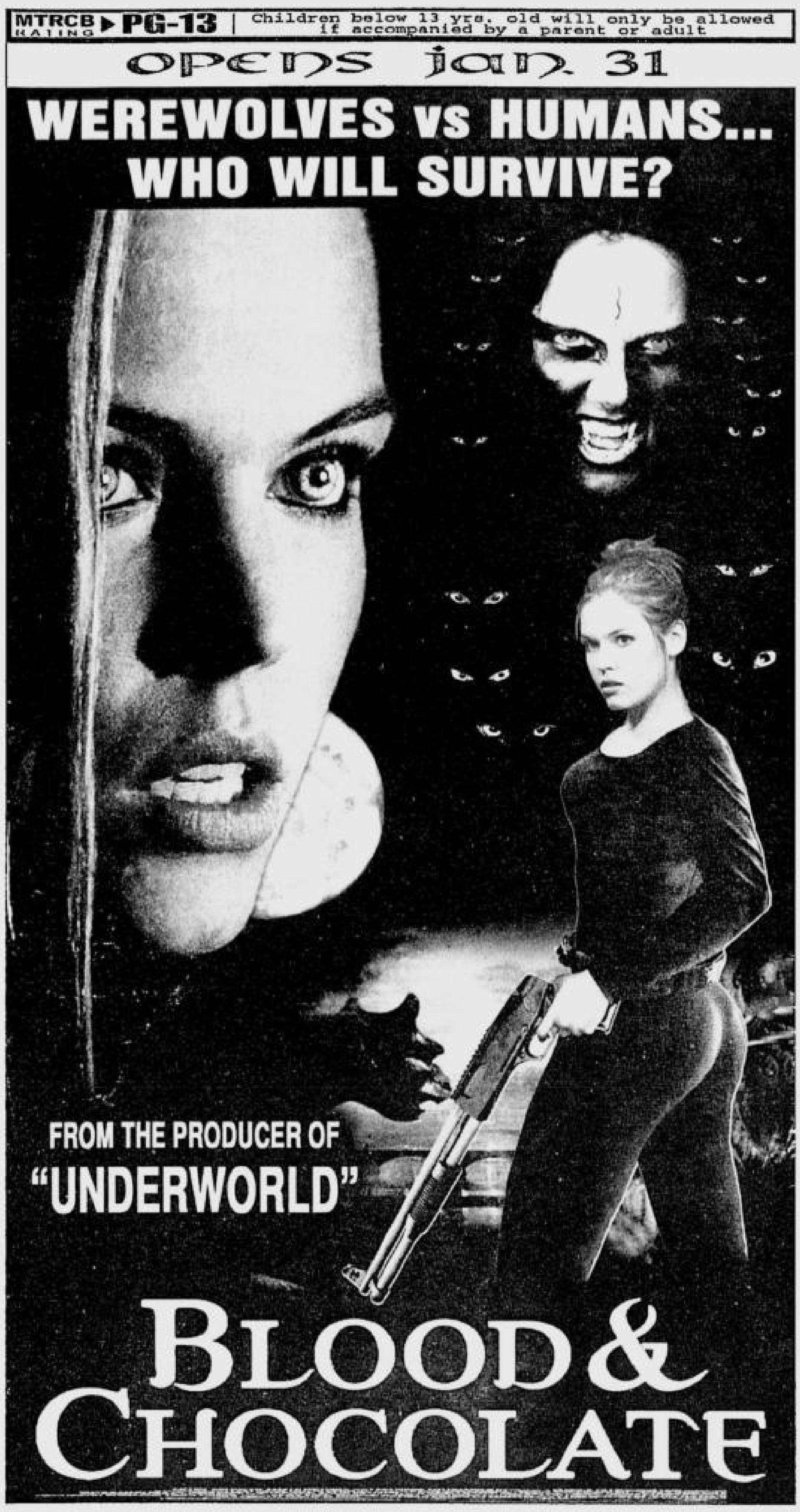
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OPENS JAN 31
WEREWOLVES vs HUMANS... WHO WILL SURVIVE?
FROM THE PRODUCER OF "UNDERWORLD"
BLOOD & CHOCOLATE

Leisurely Sunday . . .

From page E2

stein, son of the late celebrated modern artist **Roy Lichtenstein**, "Teeth" will inspire writers and editors to come up with puns and boys and men to squirm and break into nervous laughter over the sight of severed penises. Many will find subtext in female empowerment in the film's story about how the lead character deals with aggressive male sexual behavior. Everybody should just relax—it's just a movie but we bet it's one of those comedy-horror flicks that will make tons of money.

Then it was back to more depressing offerings. "An American Crime" tells a true story that shocked America in 1965: Two girls, left for an extended stay by their carnival-worker parents at the home of a struggling single mother (Catherine Keener), experienced torture and cruelty. Ellen Page, playing the older girl in this tragic tale, is unforgettable.

Afterward, it was back to Eccles for the premiere of "Year of the Dog." **John C. Reilly**, always reliable for an engaging performance (he plays Molly's neighbor), joined the rest of the cast. Regina, in winter white, showed that it was possible to be glam while all bundled up.

Marie-France Arcilla, still sporting a tan from her recent trip to Boracay, interviews AurAeus for Cinema AZN. RUBEN V. NEPALES

Very Asian

The following morning, we saw the cast (except John) and Mike again for the brunch we mentioned at the top of this column.

"Zoo," a documentary about a tragic bestiality case in the Pacific Northwest in 2005, was next in our itinerary. Journalists also packed the screening of this docu which chronicles how men, through the Internet, formed an informal group, united in their love for and desire to have sex with Arabian stallions.

The docu turns out to be a well-made, beautifully photographed examination of this bestiality incident in which one man, a Boeing engineer, died after his colon was perforated by a stallion. It was very objective and not graphic at all.

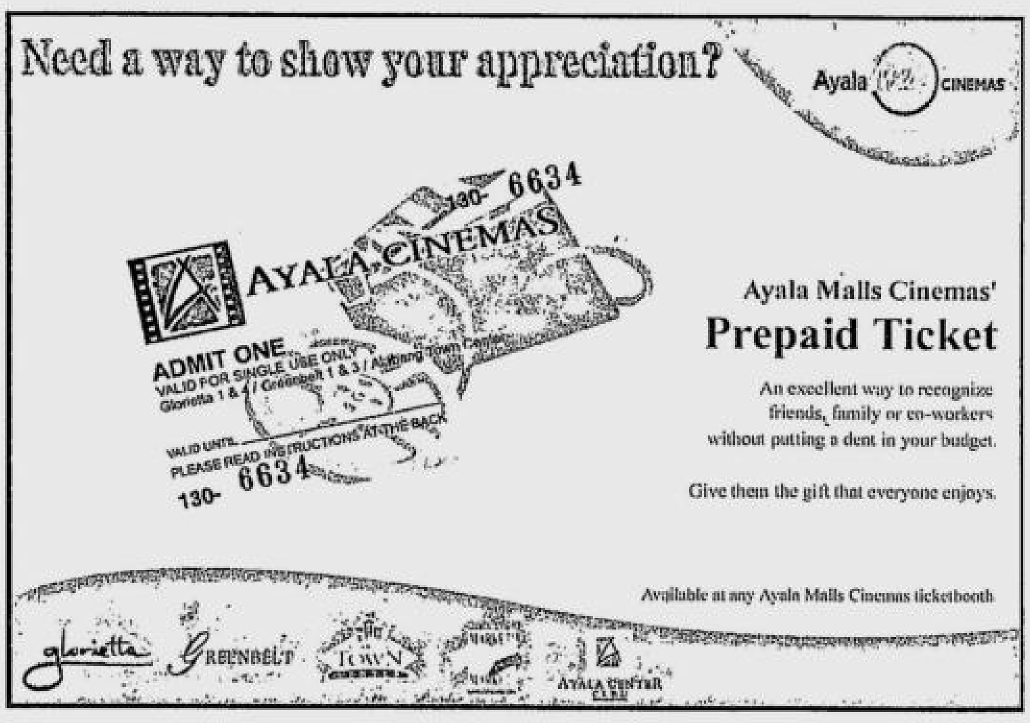
We walked over to the nearby China Panda for the 7th annual celebration of Asian and Pacific filmmakers whose works are entered in Sundance and the alternative Slamdance which are happening simultaneously. **Winston Emano, David Magdael** and **Rick Hernandez** are among the many Asian-American figures responsible for making this get-together possible every year.

Following tradition, Winston announced the Sundance Class of 2007, which included Auraeus. It was gratifying to see that more Asian and Pacific filmmakers are making it to Sundance each year.

The affair was crowded and noisy. Very Asian, in other words. But it was the warmest place that wintry night in all of Park City, literally and figuratively.

More Sundance coverage in our Sunday column.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.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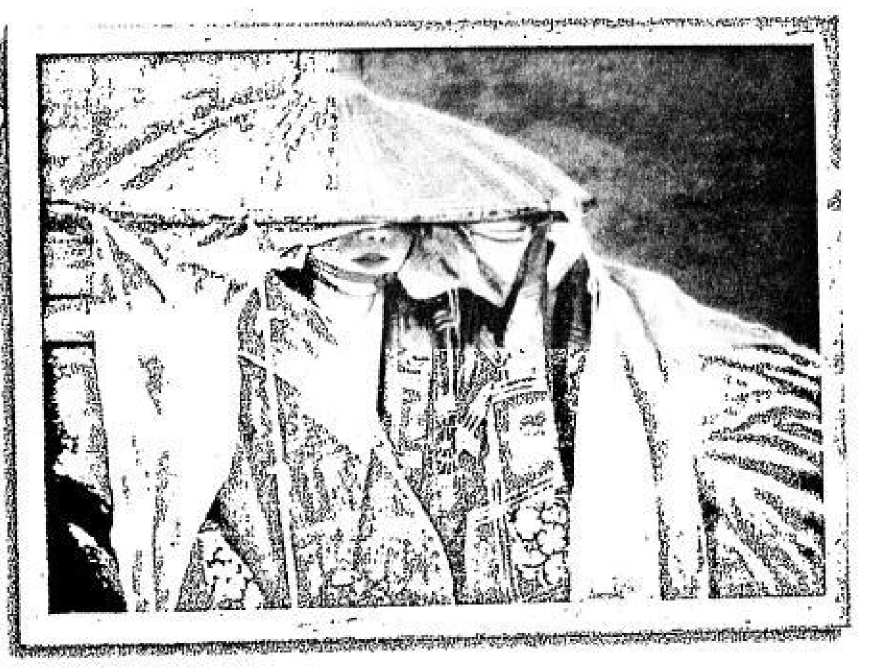
TAGAYTAY REFUGE. A famous concert and recording artist built this hideaway. *Page F6.*



CELEBRATING WOMEN

"Women in/on Fiberglass" is the title of an exhibit of paintings by a singer-actor who was originally trained to be an architect, and who took up the paintbrush in 1998. *Page F6.*

PARTY! PARTY!

IC Mendoza turned 19 recently. His mom, INQUIRER Entertainment columnist Dolly Anne Carvajal, threw a party that was attended by his friends and hers. ***Page F5.***

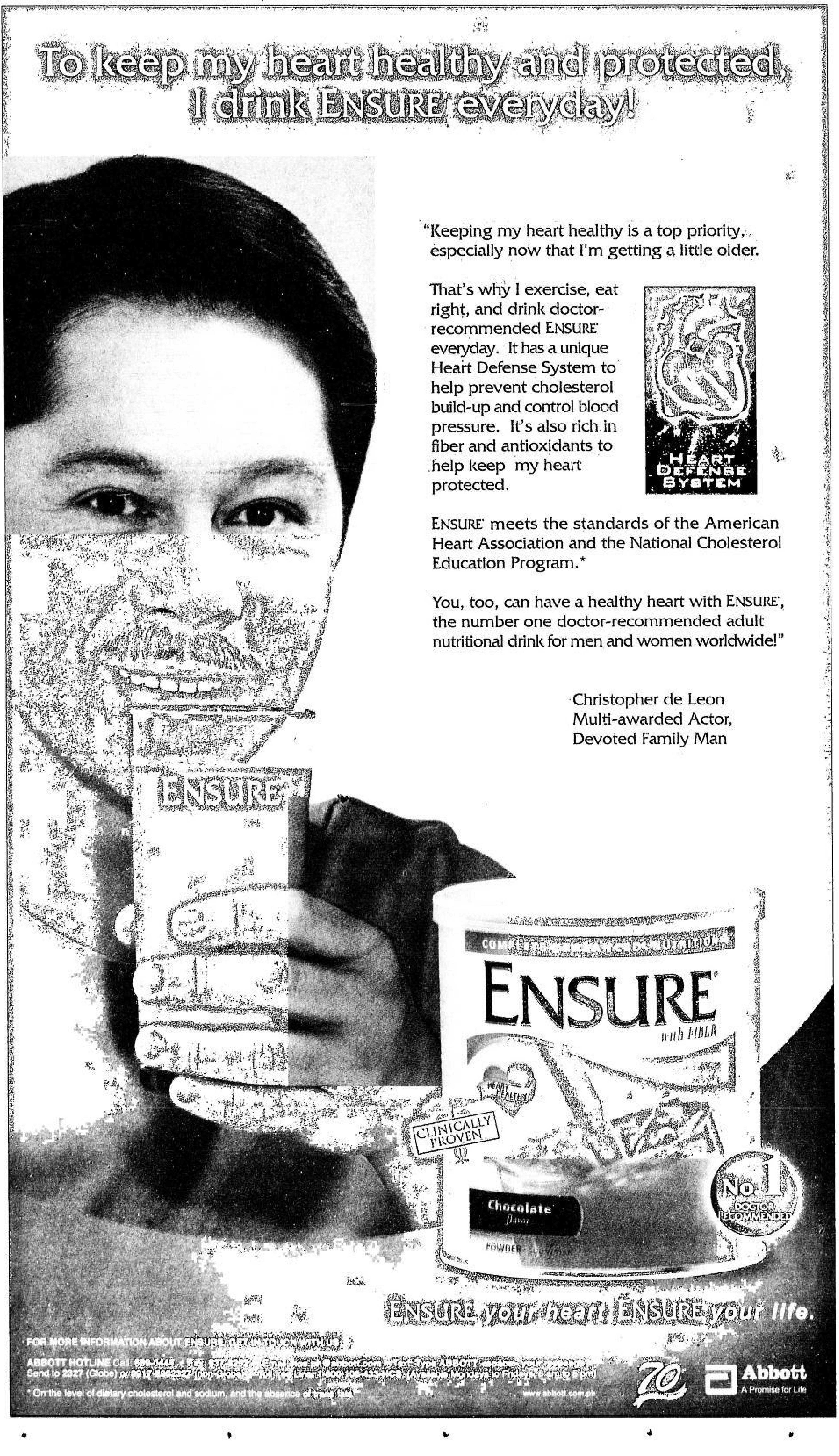
FAVORITE NOOKS

NATHAN LOPEZ

I LIKE HANGING OUT IN THE LIVING room where there are two personal computers (PCs). I love games like DotA and World of Warcraft. It's amazing that I can play online games with my cousins who are in California. I also play Halo, NBA Jam and Doom 3 on the Xbox in my room upstairs. My mom, however, has set a strict playing schedule for us—only on weekends, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. I also watch "Naruto" on the PC. "Naruto" is an anime TV series based on a manga (Japanese comic book).

Bayani San Diego Jr.

STARS from around the world, including Paris Hilton, have descended on Park City, Utah, for the Sundance Film Festival. Paris brought her famous pet dog Tinkerbell. ***Page F5.***



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HEAD-TURNING GAL PALS BFF (Best Friends Forever) Katie Holmes, far left, and Victoria Beckham, left, attended the inauguration of Italian fashion designer Giorgio Armani's new shop in Paris on Tuesday. Both dressed in arresting and definitely haute couture black, of course the two high-profile celebs made heads turn. And of course they enjoyed the attention.

REUTERS

RED CARPET

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① NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
MTRCB: GP
12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

② BABEL
MTRCB: PG-13
12:35, 3:25, 6:15, 9:05

③ DÉJÀ VU
MTRCB: PG-13
2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

④ LITTLE CHILDREN
MTRCB: R-18
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
MTRCB: GP
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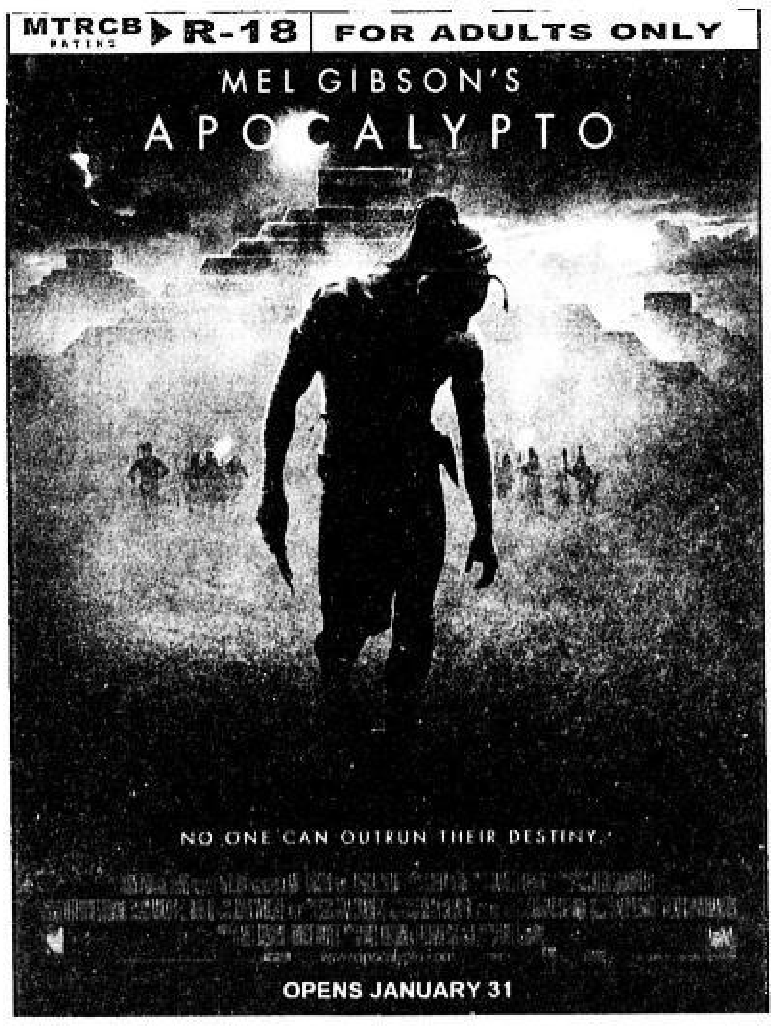
1	DÉJÀ VU	2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:05	PG-13
2	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	1:25, 3:50, 6:15, 8:40, 11:05	G
3	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30	G
4	LITTLE CHILDREN	2:20, 5:20, 8:20, 11:10	R-18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7:15, 10:00
PG-13

CINEMA 2 — NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
10:30, 1:20, 4:10
7:00, 9:50
GP

PROMENADE
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 — LITTLE CHILDREN
11:00, 1:50, 4:40
7:30, 10:25
R-18

CINEMA 4 — BABEL
10:30, 1:25, 4:25
7:25, 10:25
PG-13

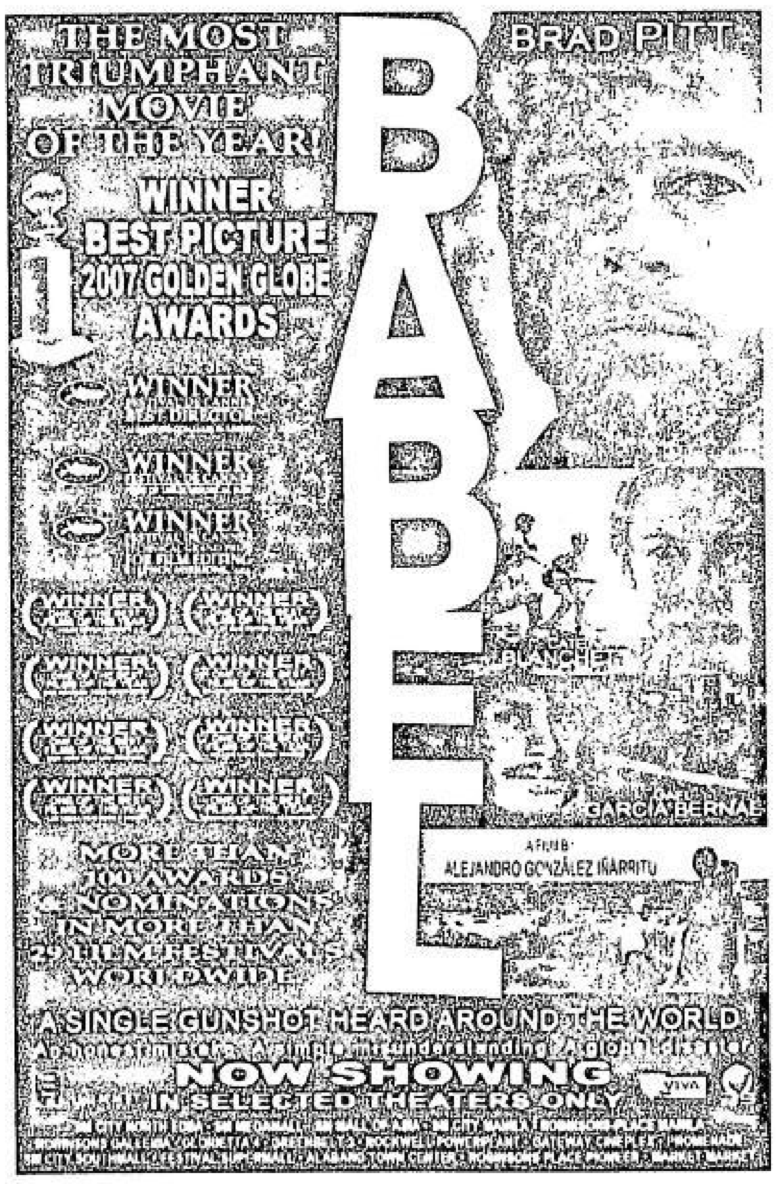
CINEMA 5 — NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
11:10, 2:00, 4:50
7:40, 10:30
GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL 722-4490

MUSIC MUSEUM

Jan. 23, 2007	Marissa Sanchez	8:30 PM
Feb. 02 & 03, 2007	Piolo Pascual and Sam Milby	8:30 PM
Feb. 7 & 8, 2007	Agot Isidro "Back to Basics"	8:30 PM
Feb 13 & 14, 2007	Ogie Alcasid	8:00 PM
EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00 PM
JAN. 23, 30, 2007	DYORDS KO PO	8:30 PM
JAN. 24, 2007	"PAKNERS" 9 Ball Celebrity Challenge	6:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635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Charlotte's Web
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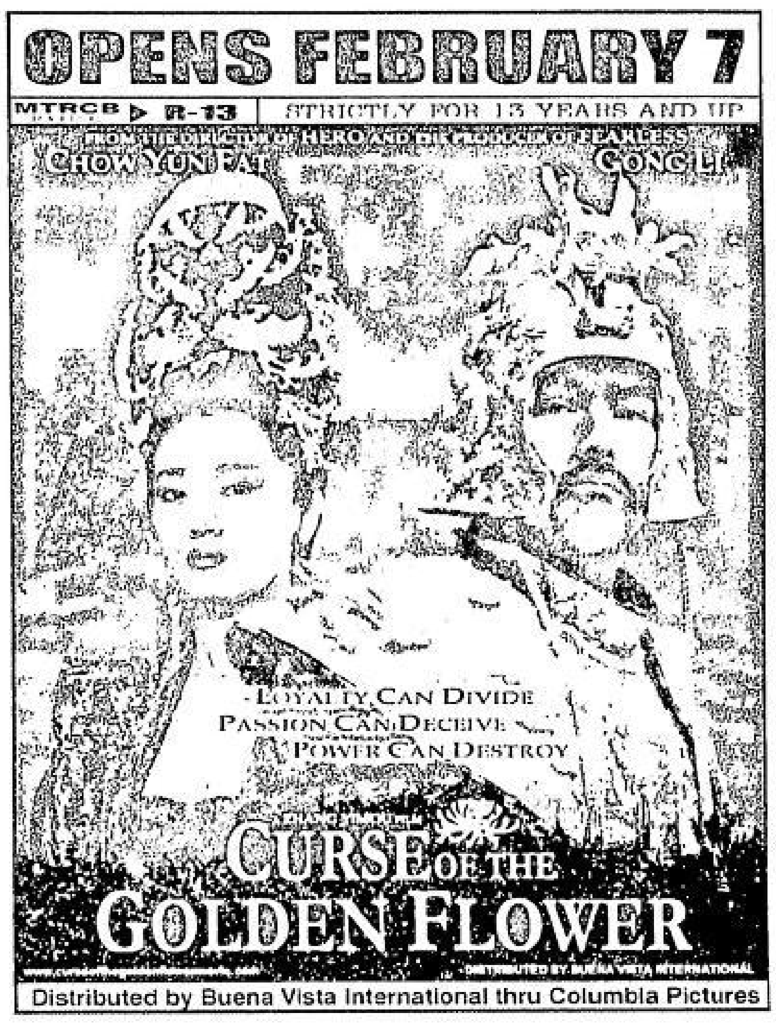
BLOOD DIAMOND R13 1:00,4:00,7:00,10:00	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM G 1:00,3:30,6:00,8:30	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM G 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30
DÉJÀ VU PG13 1:55,4:40,7:25,10:10	LITTLE CHILDREN R18 2:30,5:10,7:50,10:30	BABEL PG13 2:00,4:50,7:40,10:30

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440/41
MATINEE PHP 115.00 – FREE SEATING – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 P.M. – MONDAY-FRIDAY.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PASSION CAN DECEIVE
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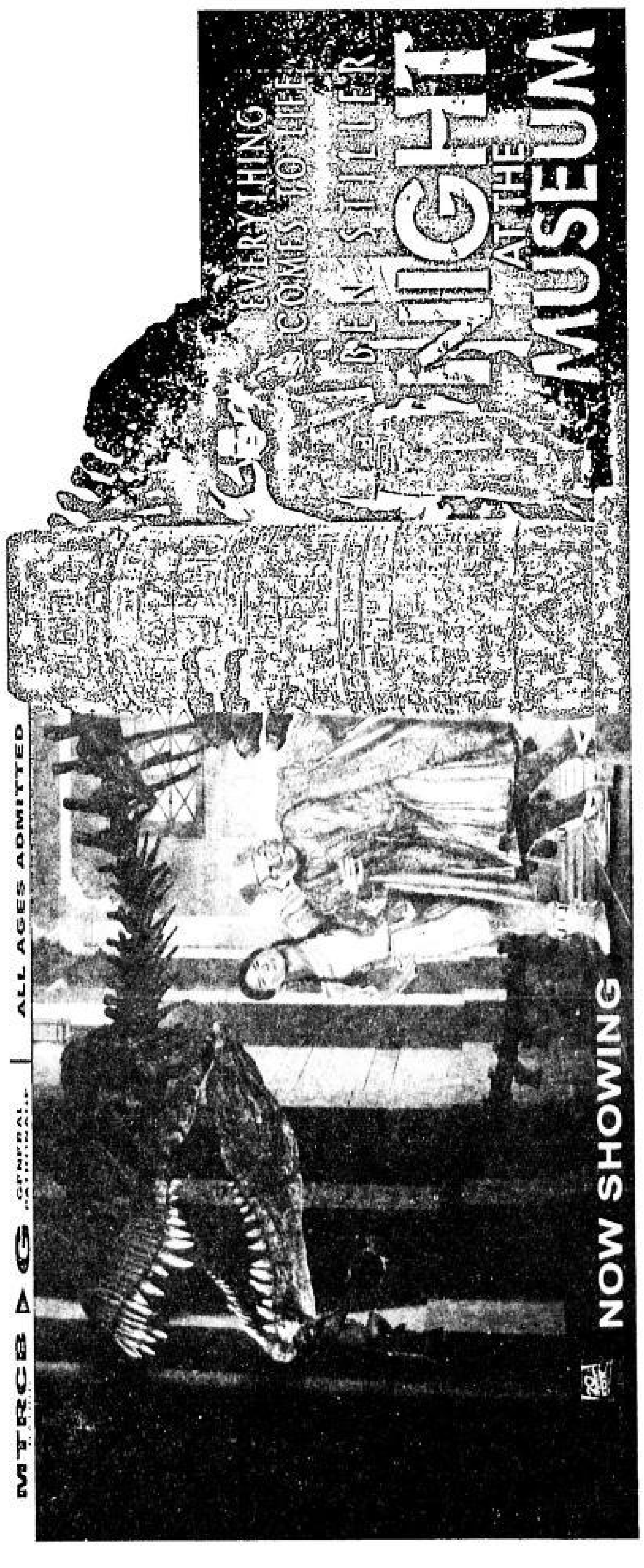
EVERYTHING COMES TO LIFE
BEN STILLER
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
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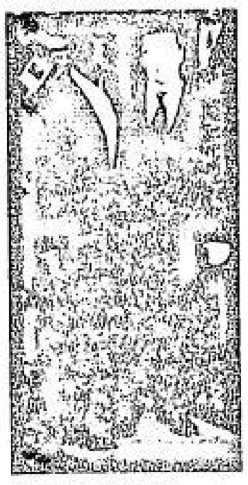
RED CARPET

KEITH David, one of the stars of the film "If I'd Known I Was a Genius," wore a winter coat, made in Africa using mud cloth, to the film's premiere at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival on Tuesday. The film is directed by Dominique Wirtschafter. REUTERS

JENNIFER Connelly with husband Paul Betany at the London premiere of "Blood Diamond," also on Tuesday. AFP



LEONARDO Di and Djimon Hounsou at the same London premiere. REUTERS

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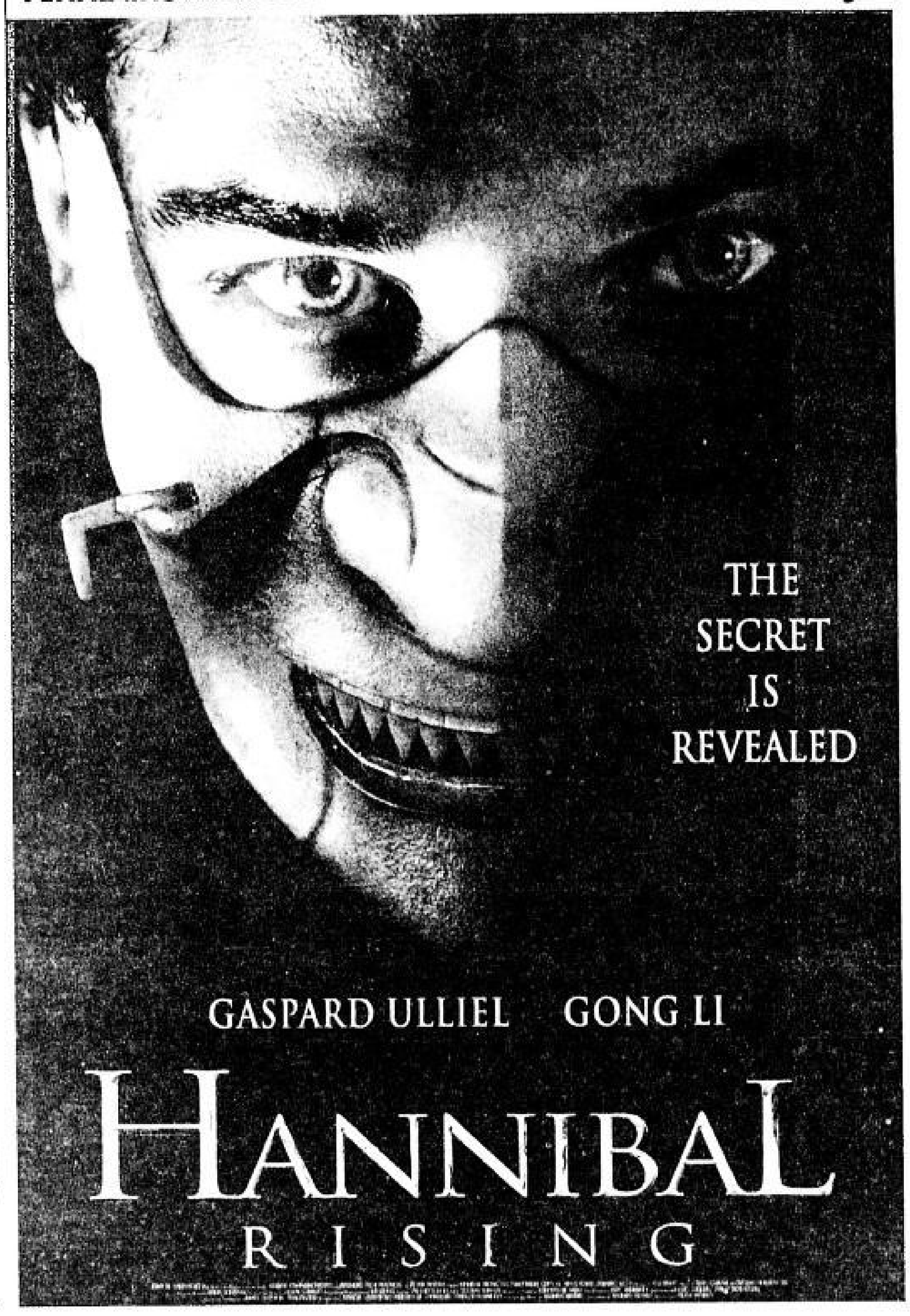

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BABEL 12:20 / 3:20 / 6:20 / 9:20	ERAGON 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:50	AGENT X-44 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 1:35 / 2:10 / 4:15 / 4:50 6:55 / 7:30 / 9:35 / 10:10	THE BLOOD DIAMOND 4:40 / 9:40	LITTLE CHILDREN 12:20 / 3:20 / 6:20 / 9:20	
KASAL, KASALI, KASALO 12:20 / 2:30 / 7:30	SAW 3 12:30 / 2:50 / 5:10 / 7:30 / 9:50	DEJAVU 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00

Ali MALL 5

AGENT X-44 11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 12:15 / 2:55 / 5:35 / 8:15	BABEL 11:30 / 2:30 / 5:30 / 8:30
4 DEJAVU 12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30	5 LITTLE CHILDREN 11:30 / 2:30 / 5:30 / 8:30	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1	ERAGON	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	BABEL	AGENT X44			
G4	BABEL	DÉJÀ VU	THX NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS	INNOCENT VOICES	STRANGER THAN FICTION	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	LITTLE CHILDREN
GB1	BABEL	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM					
GB3	THX BABEL GUARANTEED SEATS	THX NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS	STRANGER THAN FICTION GUARANTEED SEATS	LITTLE CHILDREN GUARANTEED SEATS	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC	THX NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS	BABEL	LITTLE CHILDREN	AGENT X44	DÉJÀ VU		
ACC	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS	ERAGON	AGENT X44			
M2	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	LITTLE CHILDREN	DÉJÀ VU	AGENT X44	BABEL		

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853, from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Ford Car Exhibit January 24 to 30, 2007	Power Rangers Space Patrol Delta (SPD) Meet & Greet Event January 21, 2007
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Artbeat Album Launching January 28, 2007	Nestle Breakfast Cereals Event January 6 to 7, 2007

GREENBELT
Greenbelt 5 Sneak Peek presents Collection of Jun Escario
January 24 to February 4, 2007

Greenbelt Onstage
Repertory Philippines presents MOOSE MURDERS
at REP's Globe Theater - January 12 to 28, 2007
For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM
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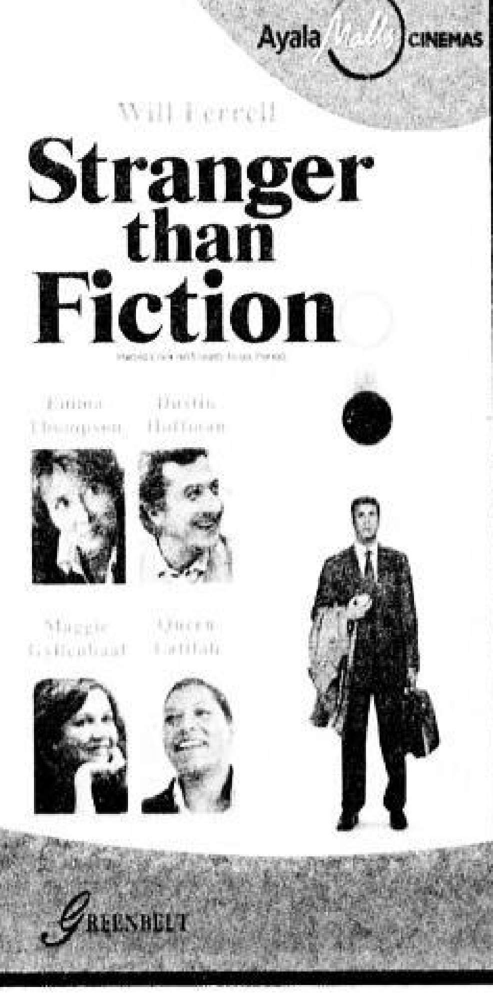
"... MAGIC..."
-- Peter Travers / ROLLING STONE

★★★★
"BRILLIANT!"
--- Shawn Edward / FOX-TV

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)



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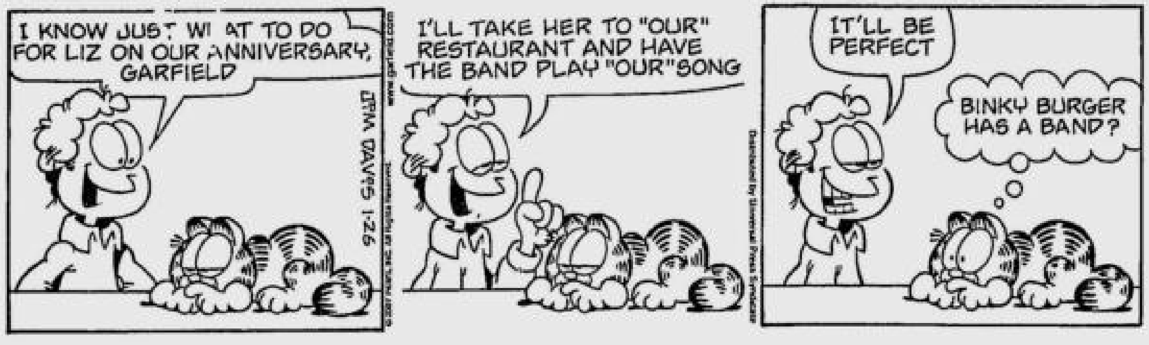
ComicRelief

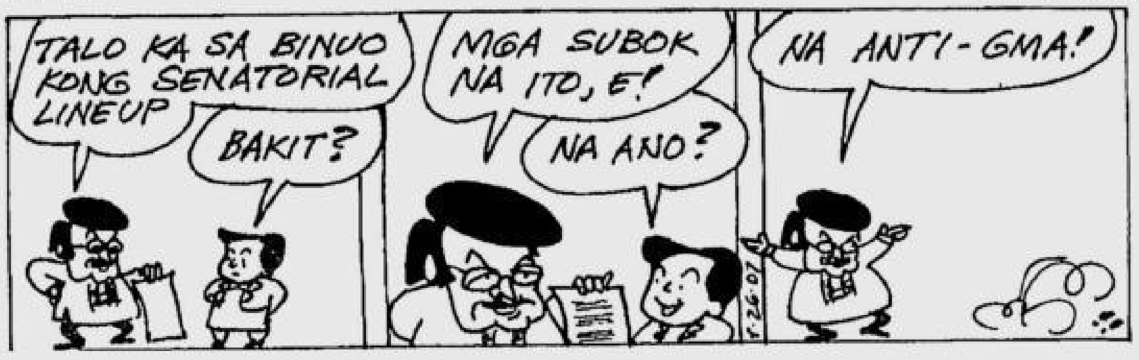
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


I KNOW JUST WHAT TO DO FOR LIZ ON OUR ANNIVERSARY, GARFIELD
I'LL TAKE HER TO "OUR" RESTAURANT AND HAVE THE BAND PLAY "OUR" SONG
IT'LL BE PERFECT
BINKY BURGER HAS A BAND?
JIM DAVIS 1-26

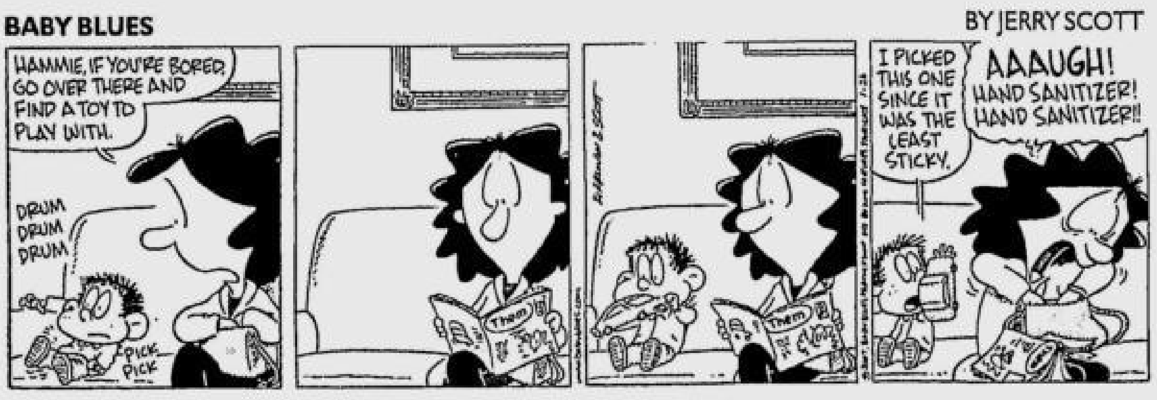
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


TALO KA SA BINUO KONG SENATORIAL LINEUP
BAKIT?
MGA SUBOK NA ITO, E!
NA ANO?
NA ANTI-GMA!
1-26-07

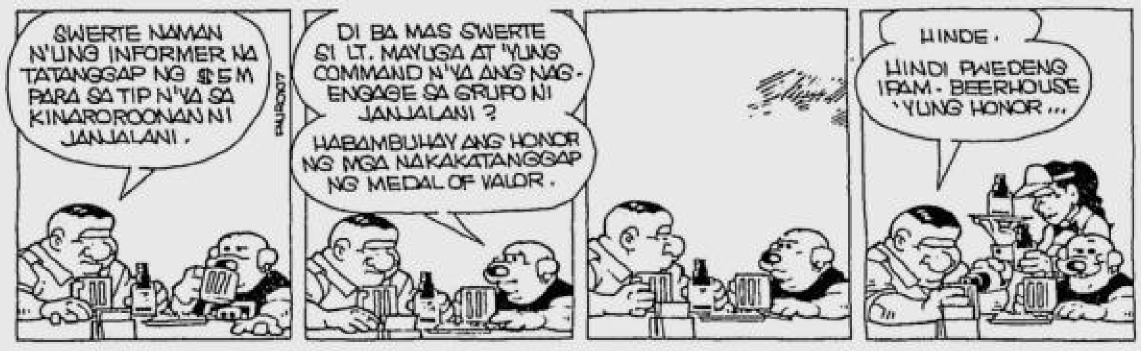
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE, IF YOU'RE BORED, GO OVER THERE AND FIND A TOY TO PLAY WITH.
DRUM DRUM DRUM
PICK PICK
I PICKED THIS ONE SINCE IT WAS THE LEAST STICKY.
AAAUGH! HAND SANITIZER! HAND SANITIZER!!

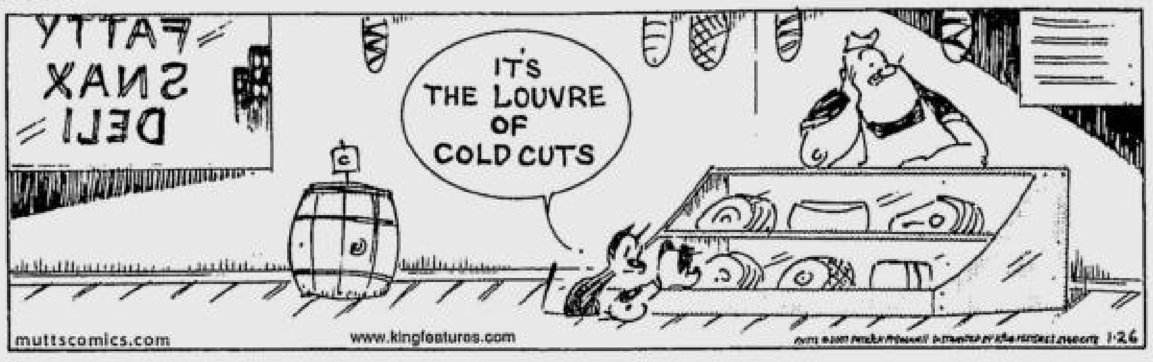
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SWERTE NAMAN N'UNG INFORMER NA TATANGGAP NG $5M PARA SA TIP N'YA SA KINAROROONAN NI JANJALANI.
DI BA MAS SWERTE SI LT. MAYUGA AT 'YUNG COMMAND N'YA ANG NAG-ENGAGE SA GRUPO NI JANJALANI ?
HABAMBUHAY ANG HONOR NG MGA NAKAKATANGGAP NG MEDAL OF VALOR.
HINDE.
HINDI PWEDENG IPAM-BEERHOUSE 'YUNG HONOR...

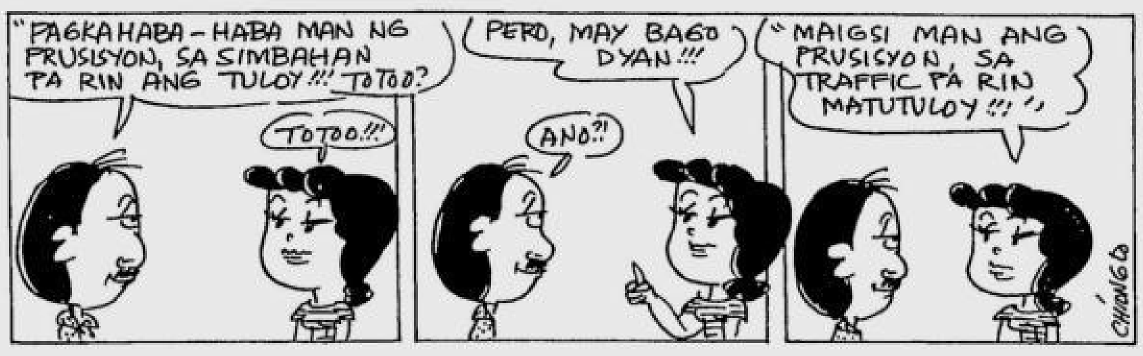
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


FATTY SNAX DELI
IT'S THE LOUVRE OF COLD CUTS
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
1·26

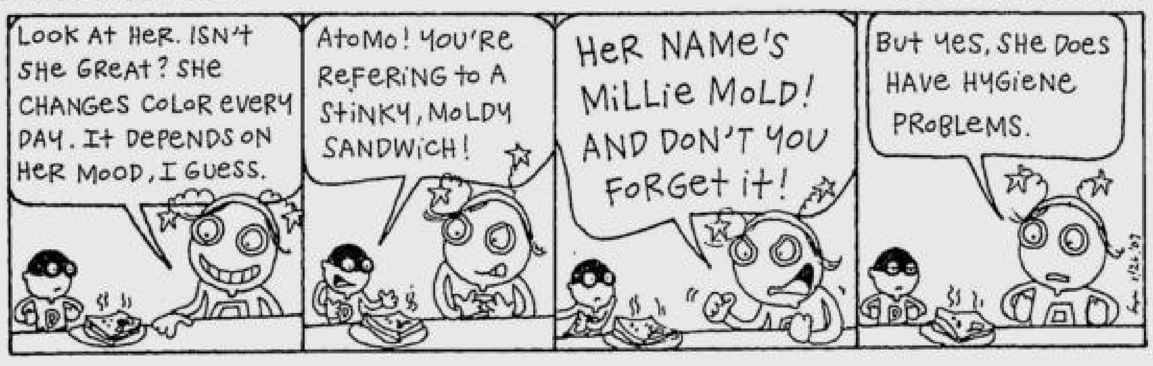
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


"PAGKAHABA-HABA MAN NG PRUSISYON, SA SIMBAHAN PA RIN ANG TULOY!!! TOTOO?
TOTOO!!!
PERO, MAY BAGO DYAN!!!
ANO?!
"MAIGSI MAN ANG PRUSISYON, SA TRAFFIC PA RIN MATUTULOY!!!"
CHIONGLO

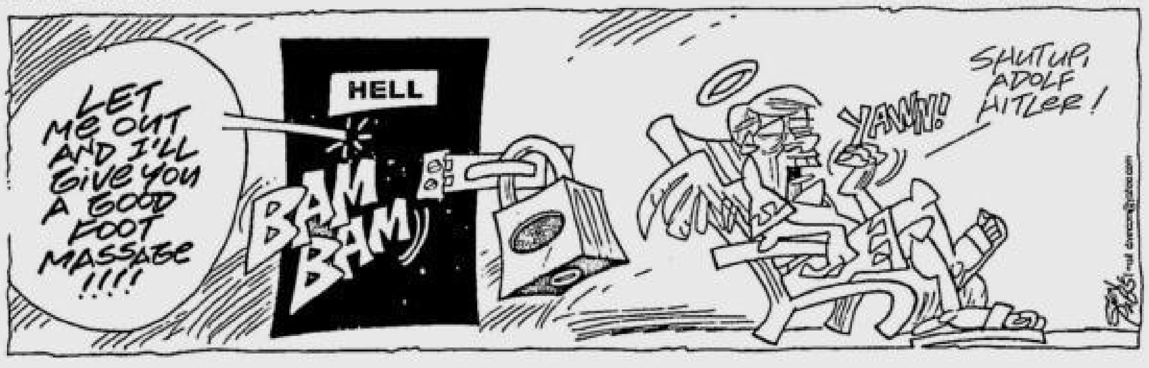
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Look At HeR. ISN't She GReat? She CHANGES CoLoR eveRY DAY. It DepeNDS ON HeR MooD, I GUeSS.
AtoMo! You're ReFeRING to A StiNKY, MoLDY SANDWiCH!
HeR NAMe's MiLLie MoLD! AND DON'T YoU FoRGet it!
But Yes, SHe Does HAve HYGieNe PRoBLeMS.

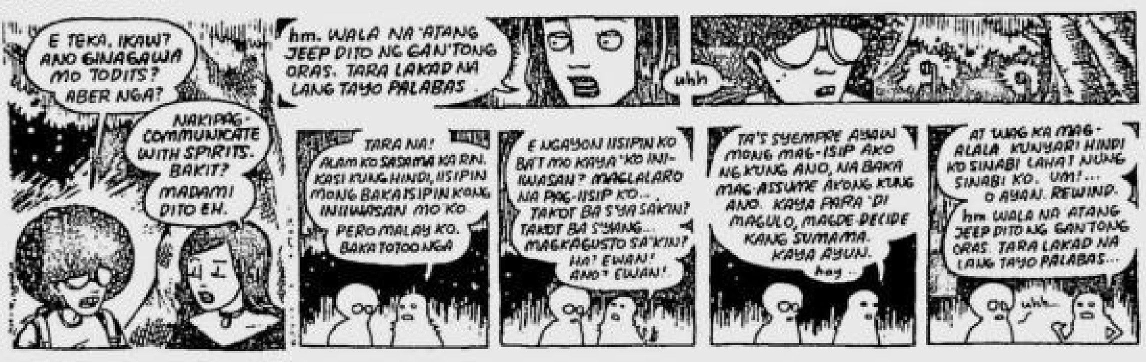
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


LET ME OUT AND I'LL GIVE YOU A GOOD FOOT MASSAGE!!!!
HELL
BAM BAM
YAWN!
SHUTUP, ADOLF HITLER!

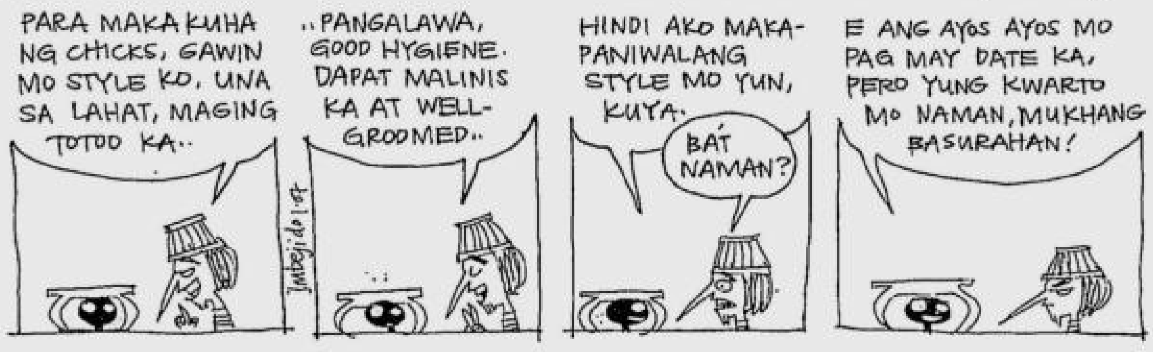
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


E TEKA, IKAW? ANO GINAGAWA MO TO DITO? ABER NGA?
NAKIPAG-COMMUNICATE WITH SPIRITS.
BAKIT?
MADAMI DITO EH.
hm. WALA NA ATANG JEEP DITO NG GAN'TONG ORAS. TARA LAKAD NA LANG TAYO PALABAS
uhh
TARA NA! ALAM KO SASAMA KA RIN. KASI KUNG HINDI, IISIPIN MONG BAKA ISIPIN KONG INIIWASAN MO KO. PERO MALAY KO. BAKA TOTOO NGA
E NGAYON IISIPIN KO BAT MO KAYA 'KO INI-IWASAN? MAGLALARO NA PAG-IISIP KO... TAKOT BA S'YA SAKIN? TAKOT BA S'YANG... MAGKAGUSTO SA'KIN? HA? EWAN! ANO? EWAN!
TA'S SYEMPRE AYAW MONG MAG-ISIP AKO NG KUNG ANO, NA BAKA MAG-ASSUME AKONG KUNG ANO. KAYA PARA 'DI MAGULO, MAGDE-DECIDE KANG SUMAMA. KAYA AYUN.
hay...
AT WAG KA MAG-ALALA KUNYARI HINDI KO SINABI LAHAT NUNG SINABI KO. UM!... O AYAN. REWIND.
hm WALA NA ATANG JEEP DITO NG GAN'TONG ORAS. TARA LAKAD NA LANG TAYO PALABAS...
uhh...

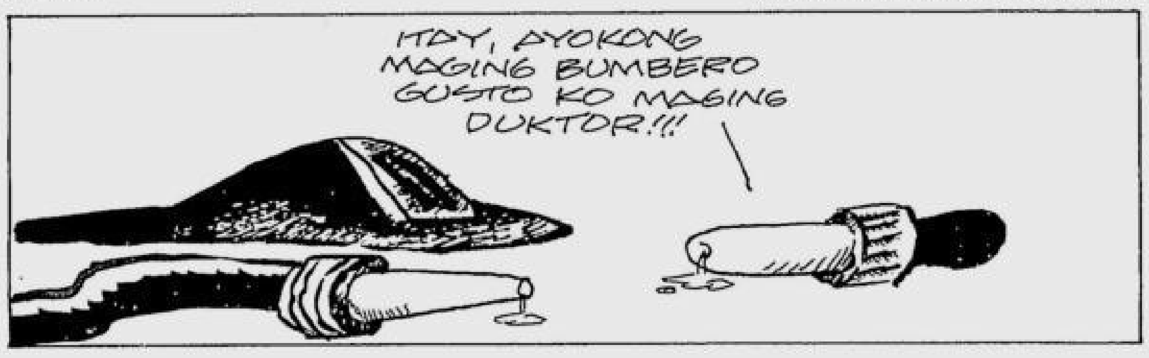
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PARA MAKA KUHA NG CHICKS, GAWIN MO STYLE KO, UNA SA LAHAT, MAGING TOTOO KA..
..PANGALAWA, GOOD HYGIENE. DAPAT MALINIS KA AT WELL-GROOMED..
HINDI AKO MAKA-PANIWALANG STYLE MO YUN, KUYA.
BAT NAMAN?
E ANG AYOS AYOS MO PAG MAY DATE KA, PERO YUNG KWARTO MO NAMAN, MUKHANG BASURAHAN!
tejido 1·07

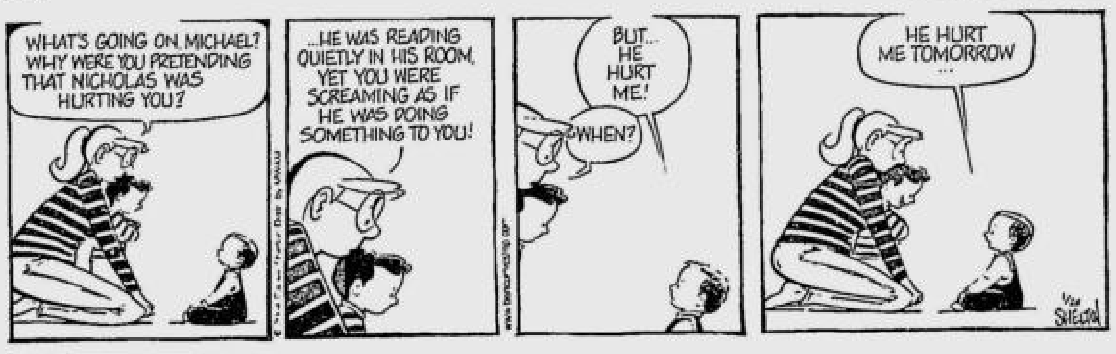
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

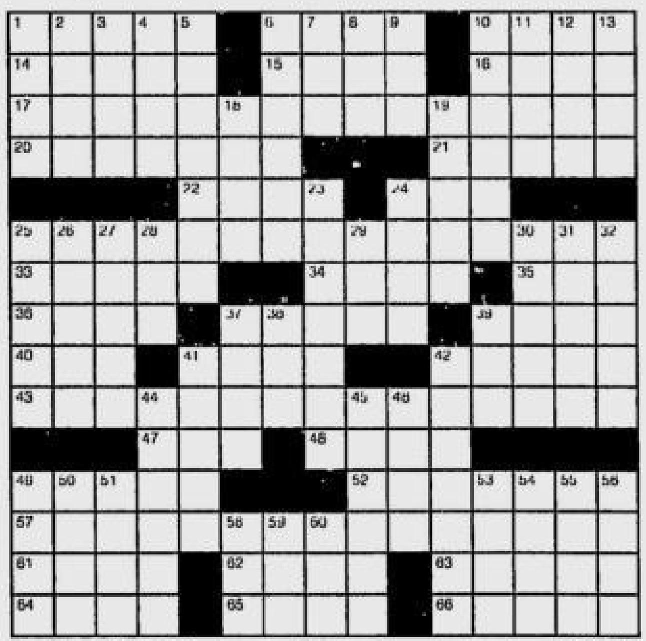

ITAY, AYOKONG MAGING BUMBERO GUSTO KO MAGING DUKTOR!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHAT'S GOING ON, MICHAEL? WHY WERE YOU PRETENDING THAT NICHOLAS WAS HURTING YOU?
...HE WAS READING QUIETLY IN HIS ROOM, YET YOU WERE SCREAMING AS IF HE WAS DOING SOMETHING TO YOU!
BUT... HE HURT ME!
WHEN?
HE HURT ME TOMORROW ...
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD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By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY

1/26/07

ACROSS

1 Boss!
6 Emulate Sinatra
10 White House office shape
14 Play ender, sometimes
15 Yank or Oriole
16 Story
17 Swellheads' group?
20 Muse of music
21 Greek letters
22 Dogs and cats
24 DDE's political opponent
25 Visitors' group?
33 Love in Limoges
34 Harvest
35 Hurler's stat
36 Julia of "One from the Heart"
37 Detroit player
39 Hitch
40 Neighbor of Syr.
41 Eat a little
42 Journalist Pyle
43 Players' group?
47 Tempe sch.
48 Webwork
49 "Philadelphia" director
52 Mimicries
57 Couturiers' group?
61 Presidential rejection
62 Golfer's cry
63 Indian, for one
64 Lendl or Pavlov
65 Saline drop
66 Seasonal songs

DOWN

1 Scruff
2 Stocking shade
3 Working away
4 Ocean motion
5 Like bogeys
6 Gun lock
7 Land in the Seine?
8 Reverse pic
9 12 doz.
10 Lazy
11 Expansive
12 Canadian prov.
13 Not as many
18 Ready for business
19 Traffic congestion
23 Forage crop
24 Petri dish medium
25 Gulf of Mex. neighbor
26 Stomachs of ruminants
27 Show signs of grief
28 Afghanistan cash
29 Professional charge
30 Medicinal plant
31 Get into condition
32 Wise men
37 Bean curd
38 Capital attachment?
39 Lanka preceder
41 Snoots
42 Flight formation
44 Eurasian plum
45 Usher
46 Old Cosby series
49 Letters for 606
50 Alt.
51 First name in spies
53 Anticrime acronym
54 Understanding words
55 Latin list ender
56 9-digit ID numbers
58 Frequently, in a poem
59 Opponent
60 Pedro's Mrs.

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

T	H	U	D	■	E	P	I	C	S	■	P	E	L	T
R	A	N	I	■	L	A	D	L	E	■	L	U	I	S
E	N	C	S	■	A	S	I	A	N	■	A	R	E	A
Y	O	U	C	A	N	T	■	U	S	E	Y	O	U	R
S	I	T	U	P	■	R	E	S	E	A	L	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	E	S	A	M	E	■	R	E	N	D	S
D	O	T	S	■	I	M	P	■	I	N	T	E	R	N
U	K	E	■	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	■	L	E	I
C	R	E	D	O	S	■	R	E	L	■	S	L	I	P
T	A	M	I	L	■	C	O	G	E	N	T	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	I	E	R	R	A	■	N	O	U	N	S
A	N	D	H	A	V	E	■	T	H	E	M	T	O	O
R	E	A	R	■	A	T	R	I	A	■	A	I	N	U
M	A	T	A	■	N	A	N	N	Y	■	C	L	O	P
S	T	A	G	■	S	N	A	G	S	■	H	E	S	S

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1/26/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're confident and dramatic. You practice the power of positive thinking. Many of you are natural leaders. Your faith in yourself generates respect for you. In turn, you're fearless about pursuing your own goals. You might wrap up something you've been involved with for the past nine years in order to make room for something new. **Birthdate of:** Wayne Gretzky, hockey player; Ellen DeGeneres, TV host; Angela Davis, activist/philosopher.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a lovely day to spend time with a friend. You feel very empathetic or sympathetic toward someone; this person feels the same way toward you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): If you have any influence with someone in power, use that influence today to help those who need some assistance. You might be able to make a difference in the lives of others. This is good.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your idealism is aroused today. Because of this, you will want to study or explore mystical ideas and unusual philosophies and religions. You want to know more about something that is hidden.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're prepared to share what you have with someone who is less fortunate. This is wonderful. It's also good for you, because what goes around comes around.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You might find it difficult to be frank or direct with others today. You're tempted to take a dishonest way out rather than confront someone with something. Just do what you can.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): A coworker might need advice or emotional support from you today. Never miss an opportunity to practice a kindness, no matter how small.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Romantic relationships seem too good to be true right now. However, for some of you, the very opposite is happening: Someone has fallen off his or her pedestal. Oh no!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Domestic conversations or exchanges with family members can be unusually frank and honest today. You're not afraid to reveal your true feelings about something.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Because your antennas are up today, you're picking up a lot of unwritten messages from people. This could create static in your communications. No buffers!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): If you spend money today, you'll likely buy something quite extravagant and luxurious. If you can afford it, enjoy yourself!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your idealism is aroused. You want to make the world a better place. You want to rally others of like minds to correct some kind of situation. Good luck.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your intuition is highly evolved today. You can practically read people's minds. You're intrigued by whatever is mysterious and hidden today. You want to discover secrets! Woo, woo.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

			7	9				2
2		8						6
					1			
	9				3	7		
			8	6	7			
		6	4				5	
			9					
3						2		5
7				4	2			

Difficulty Level ★★★★

1/26

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	3	8	9	7	6	1	5	2
7	5	2	3	1	4	9	6	8
9	6	1	8	5	2	3	7	4
8	7	6	2	4	3	5	9	1
5	9	3	1	8	7	2	4	6
1	2	4	6	9	5	8	3	7
6	8	5	4	3	1	7	2	9
2	1	7	5	6	9	4	8	3
3	4	9	7	2	8	6	1	5

Difficulty Level ★★★

Hollywood descends on Park City in Utah

THE BIGGEST STARS FROM Hollywood and a few other film capitals of the world have descended on Park City in Utah where the 2007 Sundance Film Festival is ongoing until Sunday.

Indie filmmakers, studio executives and movie enthusiasts have come since last week for the 10-day fest of 200 features and documentaries by independent filmmakers.

They've also come for the parties, of course and, many of them, to frolic in the snow.

All bundled-up, both celebrities and film buffs line up to watch the widely anticipated indie features that are bound to hit art-house theaters.

The festival was founded by actor-director Robert Redford.

ANTONIO BANDERAS REUTERS

DAKOTA Fanning and Robin Wright Penn REUTERS

BONO AFP

KATE WALSH REUTERS

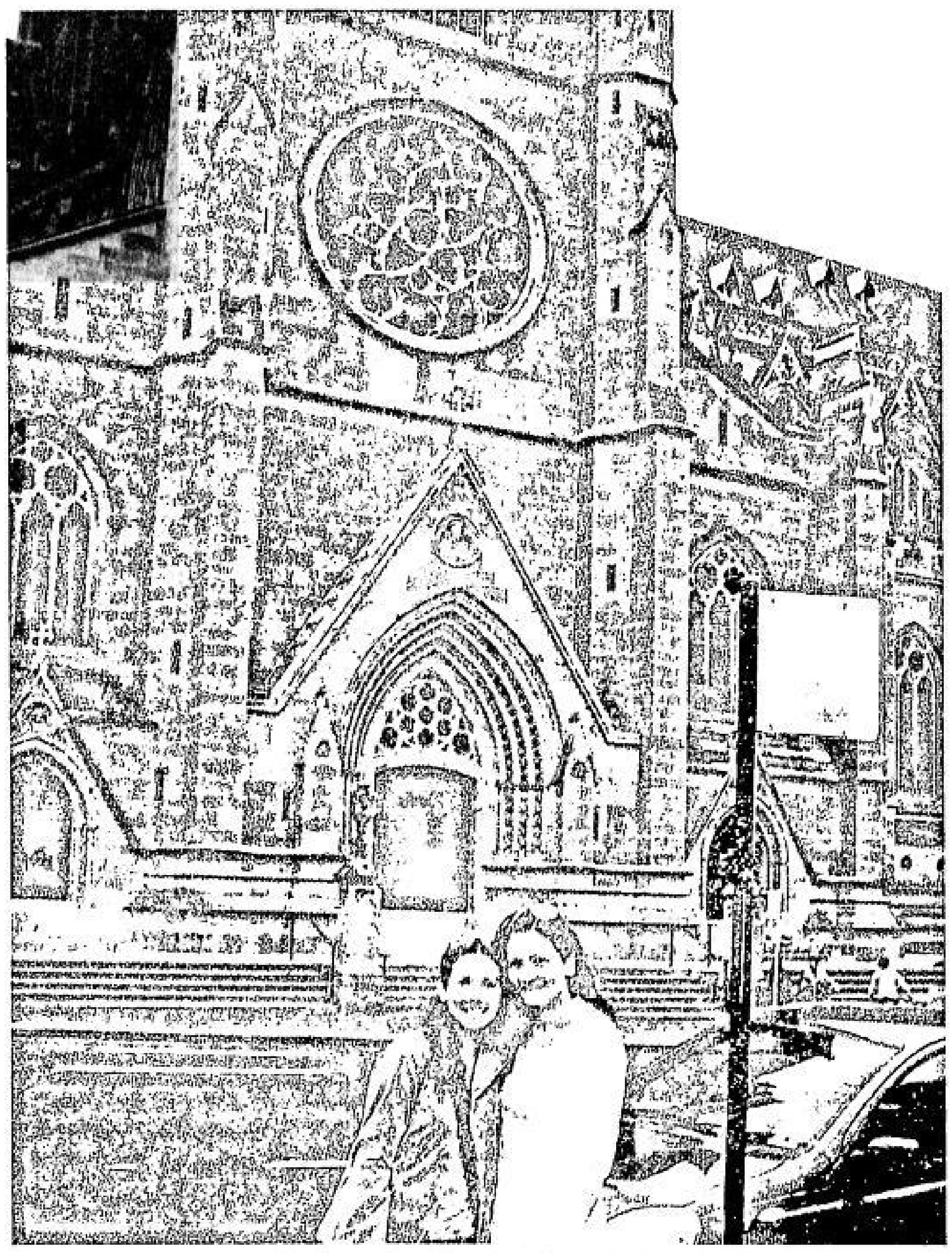
ELLE FANNING REUTERS

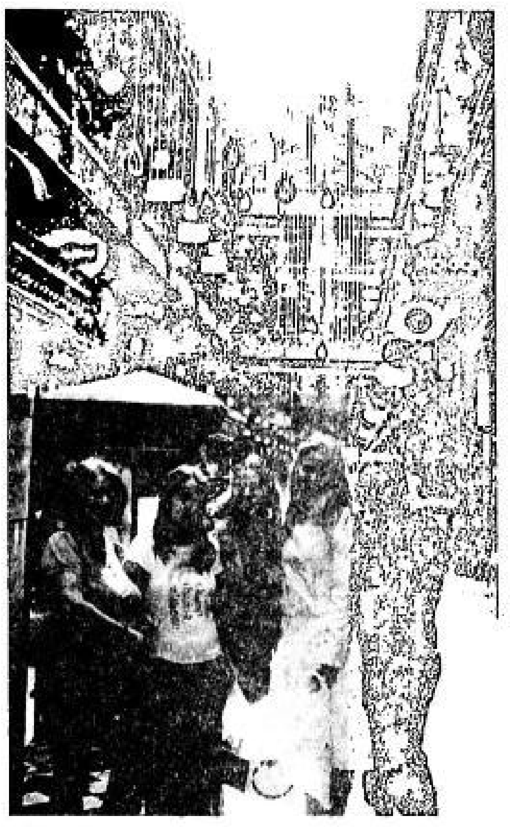
SIENNA MILLER AFP

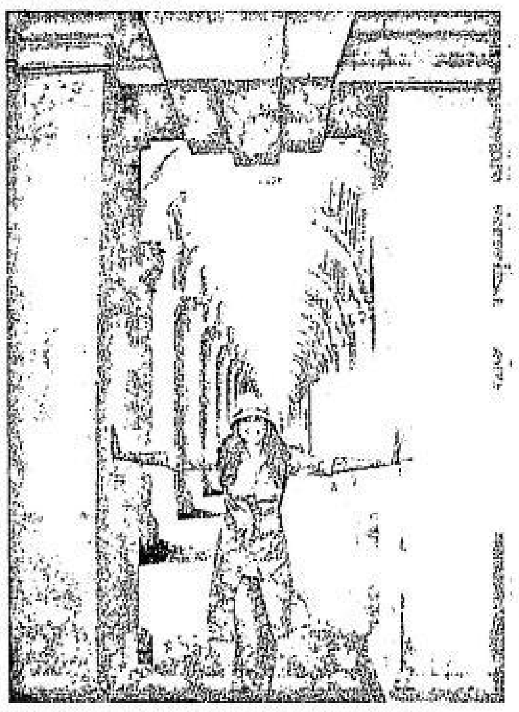
SUNDANCE FILM FE
BILLY Crudup and Mandy Moore REUTERS

TRACEY Edmonds and Eddie Murphy REUTERS

DANNY Masterson and Anna Faris REUTERS


ZSAZSA Padilla and Karylle in front of St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney.


ALL-GIRL gang hits the malls in Sydney: (from left) mom Kating, Nicole, Karylle, Zsazsa and Zia.


KARYLLE at Melbourne's old post office building

Bonding in the Land Down Under

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

SINGER-ACTRESS ZSAZSA PADILLA TREATed the most important women in her life—her mom Kating and three daughters Karylle, Nicole and Zia—to an Australian holiday last month.

The trip was primarily a "school-hunting" expedition. Zsazsa is sending Nicole to college there this July. "We checked out universities in Melbourne and Sydney," Zsazsa reports.

Between campus tours, Zsazsa and the all-gal gang had a blast in the Land Down Under.

They watched Kylie Minogue's comeback concert, visited the Melbourne Zoo and partied at the Hard Rock Café. But, girls being girls, they also hit the malls for some serious shopping.

"How time flies," ZsaZsa sighs. "Nicole will soon be off to college."

Thus, the working mom is making sure she spends quality time with her daughters.

The bonding has continued, now that they're back home.

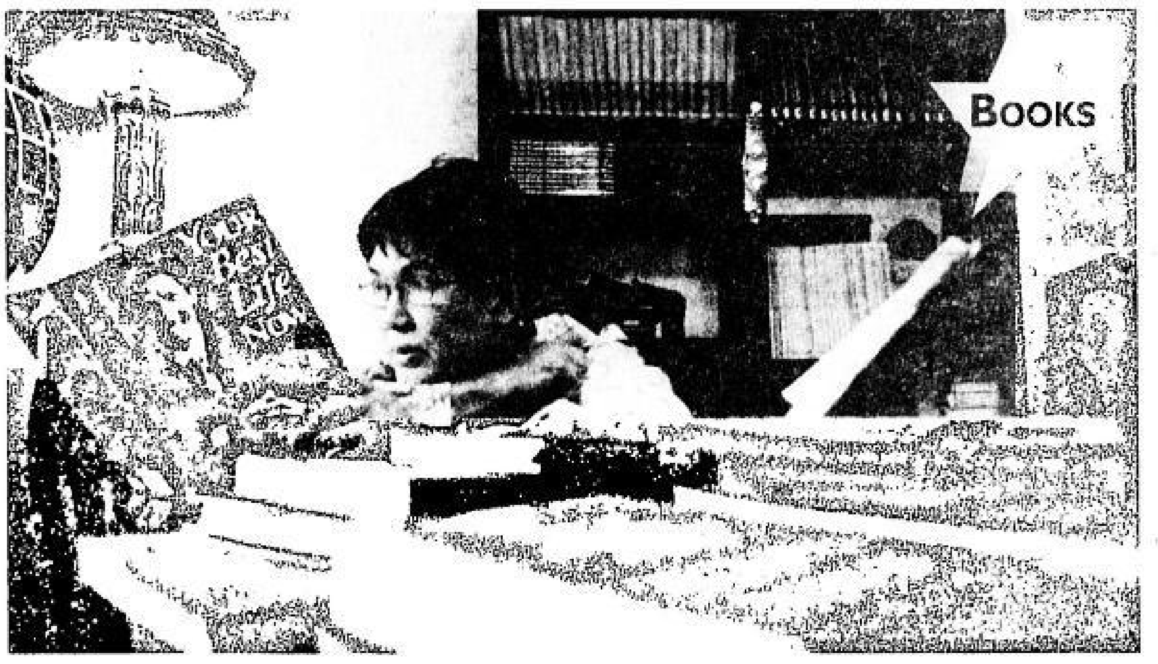
"I personally bring my girls to school now," Zsazsa says. "I've also made new rules and come up with new routines that allow us to be together more often."

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ZSAZSA PADILLA.

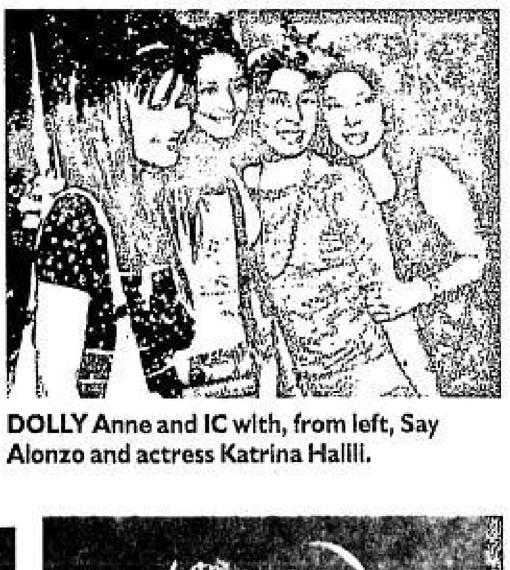
FANNY SERRANO

OF COURSE, I ALWAYS CONsult the Bible and "Our Daily Bread," but I also go back to "Your Best Life Now" by Joel Osteen. A friend also gifted me with "The Purpose-Driven Life" by Rick Warren. I loved it so much, I also gave copies to friends. These books have enriched my life. Lastly, I make it a point to review my acting books (mostly on Being, and those by Eric Morris), when I have TV guestings. My library is filled with all sorts of books on self-improvement. But I also learn a lot from the book of my own life!

Bayani San Diego Jr.
PHOTO BY ROMY HOMILLADA



IC with Polo Ravales and mom Dolly Anne, above. At left, IC with his swinging "lookalike" birthday cake.


DOLLY Anne and IC with, from left, Say Alonzo and actress Katrina Halili.

Happy b-day, IC!

WHICH TEEN STAR CELEBRATed his 19th birthday on Sunday at the Watering Hole in Edsa Shangri-La Plaza?

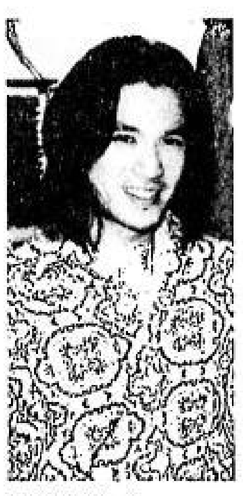
INQUIRER Entertainment columnist Dolly Anne Carvajal's beloved IC, that's who!

IC played host to family, friends and celebrity guests, including actors Diether Ocampo, Polo Ravales, John Estrada, Janus del Prado, Katrina Halili, Yul Servo and Say Alonzo, director Maryo J. de los Reyes, the pop-rock band True Faith and Viva big boss Vic del Rosario.

It was a blast, Dolly Anne said, with all-night music, dancing and laughter.

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

PARTY!
PARTY!


DIETHER Ocampo

A SURPRISE hug from guest John Estrada

MARIELLE Concepcion turned up as "Little Tessa Prieto."

Kuh's Tagaytay retreat

RECEIVING area features a tribute to Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," done by Mang Mio Babatuan, a former movie billboard painter.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KUH LEDESMA

SHE HAS A FARM ... in Tagaytay.

As a kid growing up in congested Manila, singer Kuh Ledesma says, she dreamt of living on a farm.

"I bought this in 1997, a year after we arrived from the United States," she recalls.

But the land stayed idle for the longest time. "I was very busy. I didn't have the time to even visit, much less to develop it."

She almost sold the four-hectare property. "But I kept hearing from Christian friends of the need for a retreat place. There really is a purpose for everything."

She envisioned Hacienda Isabella, named after her daughter, as a sanctuary for the soul.

"It's a ministry, a retreat place for prayer and fasting. It's a good place that I like sharing with other people. Lately we've been getting inquiries for team-building seminars, parties and weddings."

ISABELLA, left, and mom Kuh come here whenever they're free.

She built the main house in 1999. In 2005, 14 cottages followed. Now it is a B&B complex.

She hies off to the hacienda whenever she's free (she's currently working on her Valentine show "Love Is ... " and recording a "modern *kundiman*" album, "K," and a gospel album "Walking on Water").

If the main house is occupied by guests, Kuh gladly stays in any of the other cottages or rooms, named after beloved aunts, cousins and grandmothers.

It is not a "rest house" in the traditional sense for the hardworking Kuh.

"When I'm here, I'm always running around, supervising stonemasons, carpenters and landscape artists," she says, chuckling. "I'm a gardener at heart. I keep adding new flowering plants. The farm is a work-in-progress."

She is also an avid home stylist. She did the interiors of the main house and the cottages named Casa Rosa, Azul and Agua, among others. (She also designed her city home in Pasay City.)

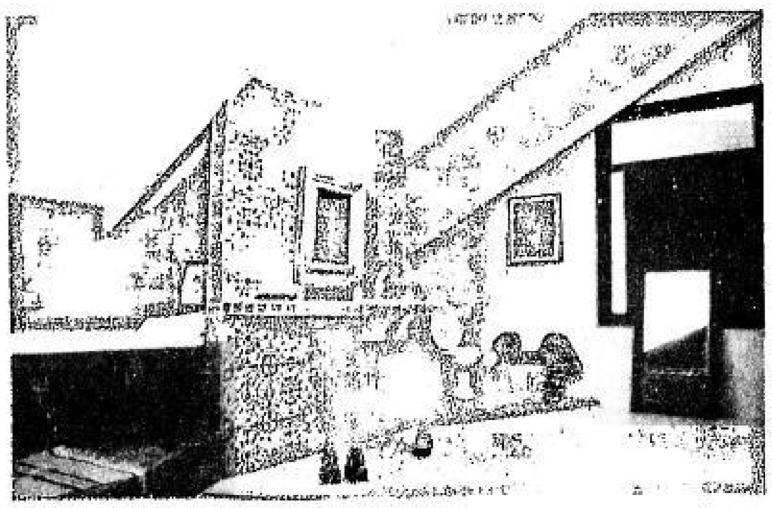
She sums up her style as "fusion—a combination of the Pinoy and Mediterranean, the traditional and modern. It's eclectic and rustic."

She has put in lots of bricks, antique wooden furniture pieces, and Mexican and Vigan tiles. She also hung paintings by daughter Isabella, T'boli photographs by Neil Oshima and pieces by her Music Museum painters Mang Mio Babatuan and his son Yeye.

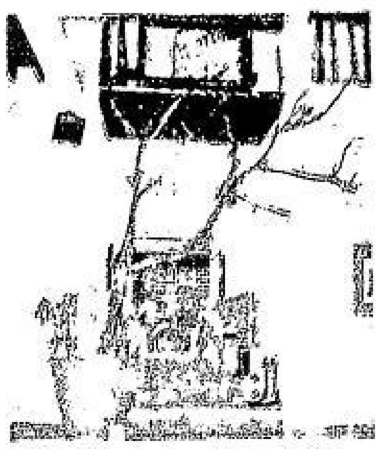
"They're former movie billboard painters," Kuh says of the Babatuans. "For me, they made replicas of (19th-century Filipino artist) Damian Domingo's paintings."

Expectedly, she keeps rearranging the furniture and decor. "The place is always changing," she says.

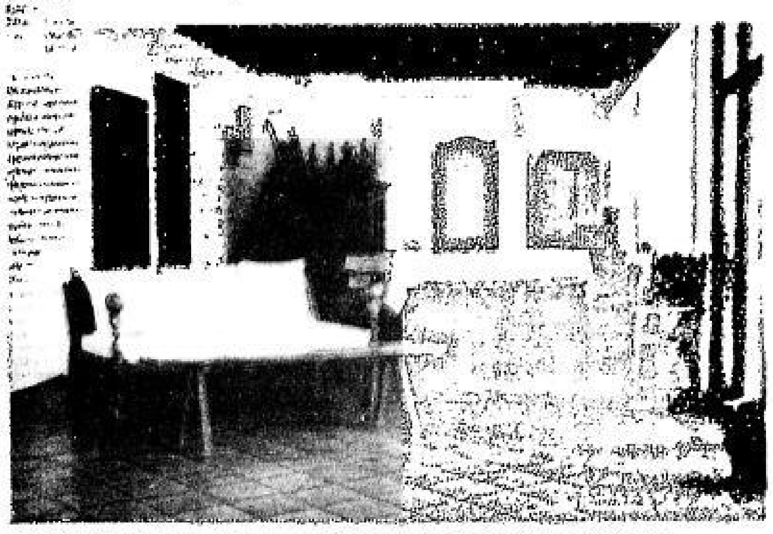
Just like Kuh herself.



BATHROOM in the master bedroom features Mexican tiles and etched-glass windows acquired from old houses.



POTTED plant and tree at the main entrance was Kuh's idea.



THE SINGER found these antique pieces in various provinces.

A SCENE from the movie "Till I Met You" was shot here.

BLUE sofa is from the United States.

Ernie Garcia paints women, on fiberglass

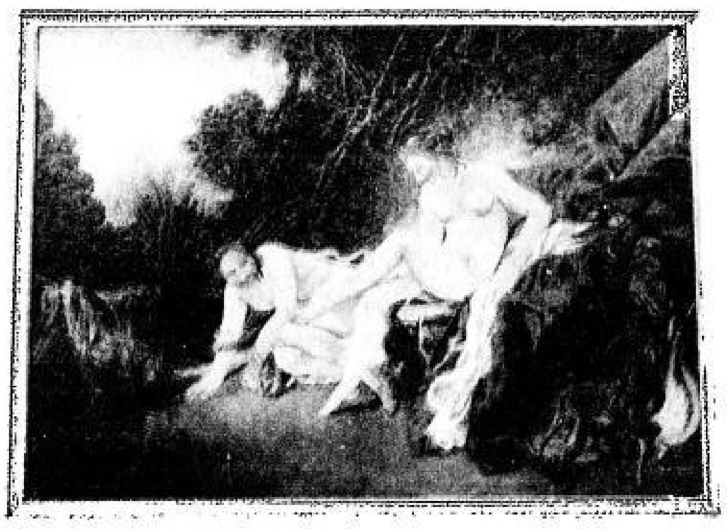
AFTER A SUCCESSFUL EXHIBIT of animal paintings on tiles last year, veteran stage and screen performer Ernie Garcia is back with his fourth art show, this time celebrating the female form, "Women in/on Fiberglass."

Garcia had taken up Architecture, but shelved his design training in favor of a movie career.

But in 1998, he took up the paintbrush between singing engagements abroad and theater performances in the country.

The result has been more than fulfilling for him. His tile paintings not only elicited admiration but also drew buyers in.

Fiberglass as a medium, Ernie says, is a first in the country. "I don't remember anyone who has done this before. That is why gallery owner Ed Soler said he had to find a slot for me, even though he was booked solid until 2008. I only had to show him two samples."



"Women in/on Fiberglass," which runs for two weeks, opens at 5:45 p.m. tomorrow, the same day that George Sison's new book, "Feng Shui of the Mind, I Am a Winner" is launched, at the same venue—the Art Space & Galerie Astra at LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia (formerly Reposo) St., in Bel-Air II, Makati City.

Tomorrow is also the anniversary of the building. Among the guests of honor are Sen. Bong Revilla and lawyer Felipe L. Gozon, GMA 7 chair, president and CEO.

ROADTALK

The BOLD and the beautiful: the same, but different

(oh, whatever)

By Tessa R. Salazar
Photos by Rudy Esperas

PICK-UPS, THE LONG OVERBURDENED HEAVY DUTY HAULERS, ARE no longer just symbols of power. They're giving even well-dressed SUVs a run for their money. Look at these two fine samples, and imagine a muscleman working the fashion crowd

Waist-deep river crossings, negotiations through slippery trails, rush expressway drives, subdivision cruises loaded with passengers, weekend visits to the market and furniture shops. All of these tasks were performed by just one type of vehicle, well, that is, two brands of one type of vehicle: the new 3-liter Ford Ranger 4x4 and the all new 2.5-liter Mitsubishi Strada 4x4.

These two pick-ups may differ in engine displacements, but their functions remain basically the same-to haul anything under the sun that can fit inside their cabins and their beds. The similarities, however, may end there.

The Strada drives like a car, the Ranger drives like a truck The Ranger, by virtue of its larger engine, is priced at P1.3 to P1.4 million while the Strada starts at P1.050 to P1.2 million.

The Ranger is more commanding and taller, while the Strada offers the more commanding driving position. The Ranger accelerates more powerfully, while the Strada offers a more comfortable ride.

The Ranger reveals its true off-road nature with the presence of the LSD (limited slip differential). On the other hand, the Strada has a back window that can be automatically opened and closed with a switch that could be easily accessed on the driver's right side.

The Strada's bed is plastic protected, while the Ranger bed goes straight to metal and paint. As a result, hauling objects on the Ranger bed carries the risk of scratching and dents.

The Strada has third brake lights, while the Ranger's mudguards are bigger.

We wouldn't mind taking the Strada to parties and on everyday city drives. And we certainly wouldn't mind taking the Ranger to the deepest jungles and off-road tracks. But then again, we still wouldn't mind taking the Strada to the deepest jungles. But the Strada is too handsome to waste on the jungle! Will the animals appreciate the fine lines?

Some wouldn't mind taking the Ranger to "sosyal" parties, too..But if they do, will the party animals appreciate the aggressive, rugged stance?

Oh, we'll let you, dear buyers, decide. For further enlightenment, log on to www.mitsubishi-motors.com.ph and www.ford.com.ph. Then, test drive both at any of the Ford and Mitsubishi dealerships.

THE STRADA is equipped with side and rear vent power windows (for GLS models)

FORD'S 'can-do' tough truck is powered by a 3-liter, 4-cylinder, DOHC 16V DuraTORQ TDCI CRDI engine

THE STRADA'S 2.5-liter DOHC 16V turbo intercooler engine is Mitsubishi's first to adopt the CRDI technology.

'DISTINCTIVE ruggedness', according to www.ford.com.ph

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CR-V Select	P999,000	P149,850	P18,229	P499,500	P10,114
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Mercedes-Benz in new dimensions

THE "SPORTS TOURER" MEETS THE demands of today's motorists for a car with generous space, exemplary comfort, excellent practicality, an exciting design and a high level of driving pleasure. The new B-Class takes the best of different vehicle concepts and combines them into an interesting and distinctive profile of its own: as a compact sports tourer, the B-Class is a touring, family and recreational vehicle with incomparable value in terms of design and dynamism.

The new B-Class succeeds in combining the advantages of various different vehicle concepts in a Mercedes-Benz of a completely new type: the Compact Sports Tourer. The sporting credentials of this premium car are complemented by exceptional ride comfort, highly generous amounts of space and flexibility to match-all at just 4.27 meters in length.

Beauty at its most practical

The Mercedes-Benz B-Class heads a new chapter in automotive design. Dynamic lines stretch from the wedge-shaped bonnet over the roof pillar to the muscular tail, whilst a wide stance and chiseled wings enhance the imposing image. The B-Class is cut from a different cloth, the briefest glances will tell you that. And the longer the eye lingers, the more the impression deepens.

Mercedes-Benz has grouped design features that accentuate the sporty, elegant appearance of the new B-Class into an optionally sports package.

High-quality materials

The design and feel of the interior features of the B-Class complement each other, creating an atmosphere of comfort. Standard specification includes air conditioning, a four-spoke steering wheel with multifunction buttons, an armrest between the front seats, power windows and tinted glass, plus high-quality trim of brushed aluminum on the centre console, tunnel and door panels.

As a further special feature included as standard, the suspension of the compact sports tourer has a new, selective damping system that adapts the shock absorber response to the current driving situation. A soft shock absorber configuration ensures a high level of ride comfort during normal driving, but switches to maximum damping force when taking bends at speed to give the B-Class maximum stability.

Occupants in the rear benefit from the long wheelbase (2778 mm) as this allows a distance between seats and knee room almost matching that of the S-Class.

The 'sandwich' concept

The unique sandwich concept is the safety centerpiece of the new B-Class. Intelligently arranging the engine and transmission in an inclined position partly in front and beneath the passenger cell makes a greater effective front-end length available for crash deformation.

B-Class performance

Three of the B-Class petrol engines are naturally aspirated units while the B 200 Turbo has an exhaust gas turbocharger.

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Ask Gibs...

Mechanic-at-large Giby Yalung answers your most pressing car problems.

Q: Every so often (worse when it rains), when the car air conditioner is switched on, it gives off an initial odor much like vinegar or a wet rag. The entire evaporator had been cleaned, but very soon after (in about two weeks), the smell comes back again. What could be wrong? What can be done?

A: The odor is caused by the bacteria buildup from the wet carpet, and the reason the odor keeps coming back even after the evaporator has been cleaned is that the air con ducting system is already dirty, as is common among older cars. During rains, the wet carpet harbors bacteria, molds and fungus, thereby emitting that vinegar or wet rag-like smell. One remedy is to spray the ducting with a mild cleaner and diluted Clorox and Lysol. You can also treat your car with baking soda and alcohol solution and place a small bag of charcoal to absorb moisture. But these are not guaranteed fixes. A chemical-free and sure fire method is with the use of an air ozone generator which you can purchase from Electromex. Call up the company at 531-6782. The concept is simple: If you kill the germs, you'll kill the smell.

Honda Civic: 2006 leader in its class

Carrying a global brand and embarking Honda's legacy, The Honda Civic shines lustrously in the motoring spotlight and proves to be the year's best-selling car in its class.

Honda Cars Philippines Inc (HCPI) reported the latest Civic's sales reached more than 5,000 units in 2006, topping its closest rival to the reigning spot last year. Since its launch in April 2006, the Civic has been dominating the country's passenger car market. Customers patronized the Civic for its state-of-the-art design, innovative technology, and fuel efficiency.

"Being the top-selling car, the Civic defines cutting-edge sedan styling, advanced engine performance, and wholesome entertainment. Yet, there's more to what the Civic offers," Takashi Sekiguchi said.

The Honda Civic comes with the whole package and whole experience. With a futuristic look and Honda's most advanced technology, the Civic gives you that elegant yet sporty feel. The 8th generation Honda Civic is the premium choice. It boasts of the best engine (1.8 liter i-VTEC), comfortable ride, excellent amenities, and classy appeal.

Surmounting what a modern automobile has to offer, the arrival of the new Civic has become a breakthrough. It has opened wider horizons and dimensions in the auto industry. With its fantastic and high-end features, outstanding aesthetics, and economic value, the Civic took the automotive stage demonstrating elegance, function, and mobility.

In this era of opulence and glamour, Honda incessantly reinvents and redesigns to suit its customers' changing needs and tastes. This opens opportunities for development to achieve perfection and customer satisfaction. Honda offers its customers more than what has been served.

The Civic has won Japan Car of the Year" award seven times. Winning the "Technology of the year" award from Automotive Research & Journalistic Conference of Japan, "North American Car of the Year," and "2006 Best New Economy Car" from the annual Car &Truck of the Year competition, the Civic has become a global car, and gained popularity and captured the car enthusiasts tastes for a sporty sedan.

In fact, the Philippine Automotive Industry closed the year 2006 with a total of 99,543 units. Despite decreased sales results in 2005, a minimal 2.6 percent industry growth was seen in year 2006. The report also says that 38,482 units of passenger cars were sold. Meanwhile, at total of 61,061 units were sold for commercial vehicles. For the compact size category, a total number of 15,225 units were sold. Honda grew the most in terms of the number of units sold, surpassing its 2005 sales level by 4,469 units (or a 42-percent growth), beckoning the top car choice of consumers.

Civic owners love the new design, inside and outside futuristic look, laid out controls, and stylish hand brake of the sedan.

"Honda continues to build bigger dreams by reinventing the Civic," Sekiguchi said. "It is a veritable leader in sedan in its class," he added.

A techno marvel loaded with 'goodies'

WHEN HONDA CARS PHILIPPINES Inc (HCPI) recently launched the 8th generation FA Body code Civic in the local market a few months ago, little did it realize that it would trigger the best and consistent volume seller in the lucrative below-1.8 liter sedan class.

The new Civic, a technological marvel in itself, is a not-so-ordinary people's car. From its humble beginnings when the first EF body landed here in 1991, the new Civic has become so loaded with "goodies" one would find in more upscale sedans.

For the first time, a more upscale and performance minded customer base of 1.8 and 2.0-liter engines is now up for grabs. HCPI has carefully planned its line up for the 1.8 and 2.0 Civics to be more appropriate for former Civic owners who wish to upgrade and maintain the prestige they enjoyed.

Noticeably, the new-generation Civic has this big sloping hood and extremely raked 23.9 degree windshield incline, similar to what you'll find in a jet fighter's cockpit. The moment you step inside the driver's seat, be amazed at the wide windscreen creating a panoramic view of the road.

As with the old Accord, spirited and safe driving with the high-performance 2.0-liter engine and sequential gearbox of the 5-speed A/T is experienced with the new Civic.

Driving dynamics is one of the key features of the new Civic. From the tried and proven front MacPherson struts and the rear multi-link suspension layout coupled with 16-inch Bridgestone 55 series tires, grip and control is second to none. Honda engineers have repositioned the suspension and steering components to make the car handle better, go faster, go safer while at the same time lessen the NVH (noise, vibration and harshness) for passengers.

Overall, HCPI offers another runaway success with the new Civic.

Giby Yalung

Special PROJECT

Hari, PCE rally for 'Pro Negosyo', 'Go Negosyo!'

Hyundai Asia Resources Inc (Hari), Hyundai vehicles' exclusive local distributor, joins forces with the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) for a more strident reverberation of their mutual call, "Pro Negosyo" and "Go Negosyo!"

Stirred by a common conviction that the entrepreneurs are the backbone of a society, Hari and PCE separately launched different but synonymous slogans to encourage and support these entrepreneurs, particularly those in the small to medium enterprises (SMEs) who comprise the base or the larger part of the economy.

Since its inception in 2005, PCE, a non-stock, non-profit and the preeminent local institution that promotes entrepreneurship nationwide, started to advocate "Go Negosyo" to encourage healthy and positive entrepreneurial mindsets among the Filipinos and help create an environment conducive for starting a business.

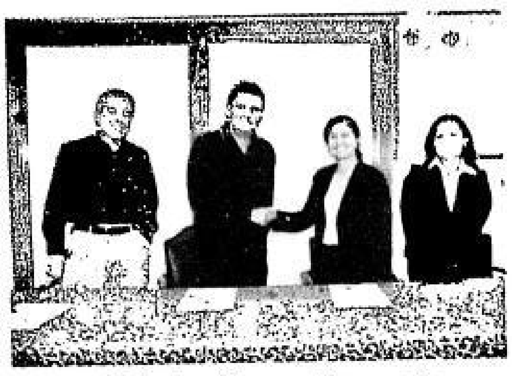
On the other hand, Hari initiated the Pro Negosyo Movement, an active and explicit expression of Hyundai's standpoint to support the entrepreneurs. Launched in October 2006 with the introduction of the new Starex PRO series, Hari's new variant of the family favorite Starex van that caters to the specific needs of businesses particularly in the transportation aspect, Pro Negosyo Movement is Hari's banner in pushing this advocacy through different activities and tie-ups like the series of business forums held recently in the different Hyundai dealers in Metro Manila and Central Luzon, and the Starex PRO donation to Gawad Kalinga's Pangkabuhayan projects.

Bound by the same dignified aims, Hari and PCE now puts their voices together for a louder shout of their cause as they formally establish a tie-up that will echo each other's rallying call.

With Hari's tie up with PCE, Hari is officially recognized as PCE's non-exclusive auto partner and official Gold sponsor for the year 2007, which covers the GoNegosyo activities and events all year round. In further support of PCE's activities and undertakings, Hari vowed to provide PCE with two Hyundai Starex PRO vehicles.

Hari also took active participation as an exhibitor in the recently concluded activity of PCE, the "Go Negosyo for OFWs and Balikbayans", held at Market! Market! from Dec. 15 to 17. In the Starex PRO booth, guests were given concepts on how the Starex PRO can be their ideal partner in the transportation aspect of their businesses. The third day of the event where four actual dressed-up units of the Starex PRO were displayed at the fountain area saw the people face-to-face with tangible business ideas through the Starex PRO.

With these efforts, Hari further affirms its sincere commitment to contribute to the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of the community through innovative technology, business solutions, and social advocacy.



In line with its Pro Negosyo Movement, Hyundai Asia Resources Inc seals the agreement with the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship as the non-exclusive auto partner and official Gold sponsor of 'Go Negosyo' events for 2007. Present during the contract signing are (from left): Rafael Ortega, PCE deputy executive director; Jose Ma. Concepcion, PCE founding trustee; Ma. Fe Perez-Agudo, Hari EVP and COO; and Leica V. Holt, Hari marketing manager.

Excitement Factors

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Design Features	29
Safety Features	31
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Downpayment	NONE

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0207 Series of 2007

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*For information on the conversion of the original 3-seater van, see brochure.

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Thule load systems is guaranteed safe from rust, no drilling required and is wind tunnel tested to aerodynamically complement the exterior design of any vehicle. Thule's line of load carriers are 100-percent machine made from Sweden and has passed the four seasons test of the ISO. Thule is the only accredited OEM designer in the local market and is a proud supplier of load carriers for brands such as Ford, Volvo, Land Rover, Nissan, Toyota, GM, BMW, Subaru and Mercedes Benz.

All Thule roof racks and boxes are theft proof and water proof, which makes your personal effects safe even during the rainy season. The aerodynamic design provides a sleek look to the vehicle. Shown is the Subaru Forester equipped with a Thule roof mounted rack system. For more information on how to gear up and make your vacation a more adventurous one, load up and visit the Subaru-Thule display at the Motor Image showroom along Edsa, or at the Thule-EGR showrooms in Ortigas Avenue with telephone numbers 744-6367 and Pasong Tamo (892-7847), or log on to www.thule.com.

Nitto: the tuner's choice

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Currently making waves in the United States and Japan for many years is Nitto tires. Nitto's superior super grip, all-season performance and good looks have made it the preferred choice of professional drifters, sport compact enthusiasts and tuners.

The Nitto Neo Gen series features a silica reinforced tread compound which improves tread block rigidity for enhanced wet and dry traction. The tread pattern is an asymmetrical, non-directional design, optimized for balanced performance in both wet and dry road conditions. The inside shoulder and center tread areas have a combination of circumferential and slanted grooves that provide water drainage from the contact patch, equating to an increased level of on-road grip and steering response. The low void-ratio and outside shoulder blocks are designed to provide top level handling and cornering response during normal to high performance driving conditions.

"Nitto's aggressive approach to tire designs has won the hearts of those looking for that special tire for their ride. Competitive pricing coupled with tremendous performance has kept Nitto at the forefront of the tuner's market. This is innovative tire technology at its best," says Sammy Liuson of Wheel Gallery. For inquiries, call 724-7176, 724-2739, or log on to www.conceptonewheels.com.

Chevrolet Aveo Sedan: the adventurous and sophisticated in mind

Chevrolet rocked the small car market with the new 2007 Chevrolet Aveo sedan which promises to captivate the young and sophisticated motorist with its fresh color, fun spirit and modern design. The Aveo Sedan's concept includes the most spacious interior in its class, delivered in luxury and comfort, and world-class production standards that guarantee its quality.

The Aveo Sedan is Chevrolet's response to discriminating customer needs. The 1.4-liter Aveo's long list of equipment and features which includes the high performance Euro suspension tuning system ensures that it will deliver the best value and most competitive pricing in its class.

The 2007 Chevrolet Aveo Sedan features a body-frame that gives it a large appearance and stylishly spacious interior at the same time providing superior comfort levels with plenty of leg and head-room that will easily accommodate up to five passengers.

Francis Burdett, president and managing director of General Motors Philippines, said, "The Chevrolet Aveo is a brand new model, designed for optimal consumer benefits with excellent functionality and practicality. It's truly an outstanding engineering achievement, made possible through collaboration among GM's worldwide engineering teams, including North America, Latin America, Asia-Pacific and Australia. Its attractive design was produced by world renowned Italian design house Italdesign Guigiaro Design Studio."

"The Aveo will appeal to sophisticated young men and women who have more than just a streak of adventure and passion in their personality, but who also appreciate value for their money," explained Burdett

The Aveo also incorporates the high performance Euro Ride Suspension, which was especially enhanced to accommodate the tough road conditions found in the Philippines. It's a car that truly makes a statement.

Design-wise, this car is outstanding. The Chevrolet Aveo Sedan's front grille was designed to look bigger and wider while the Chevrolet bowtie logo was enlarged. Frontal lamps are multi focus reflection, which features the front high beam/low beam and signal lights in a single casing. The front engine hood sports likewise a stylish design to go with the rest of the car and to match the new front grille and frontal lamps.

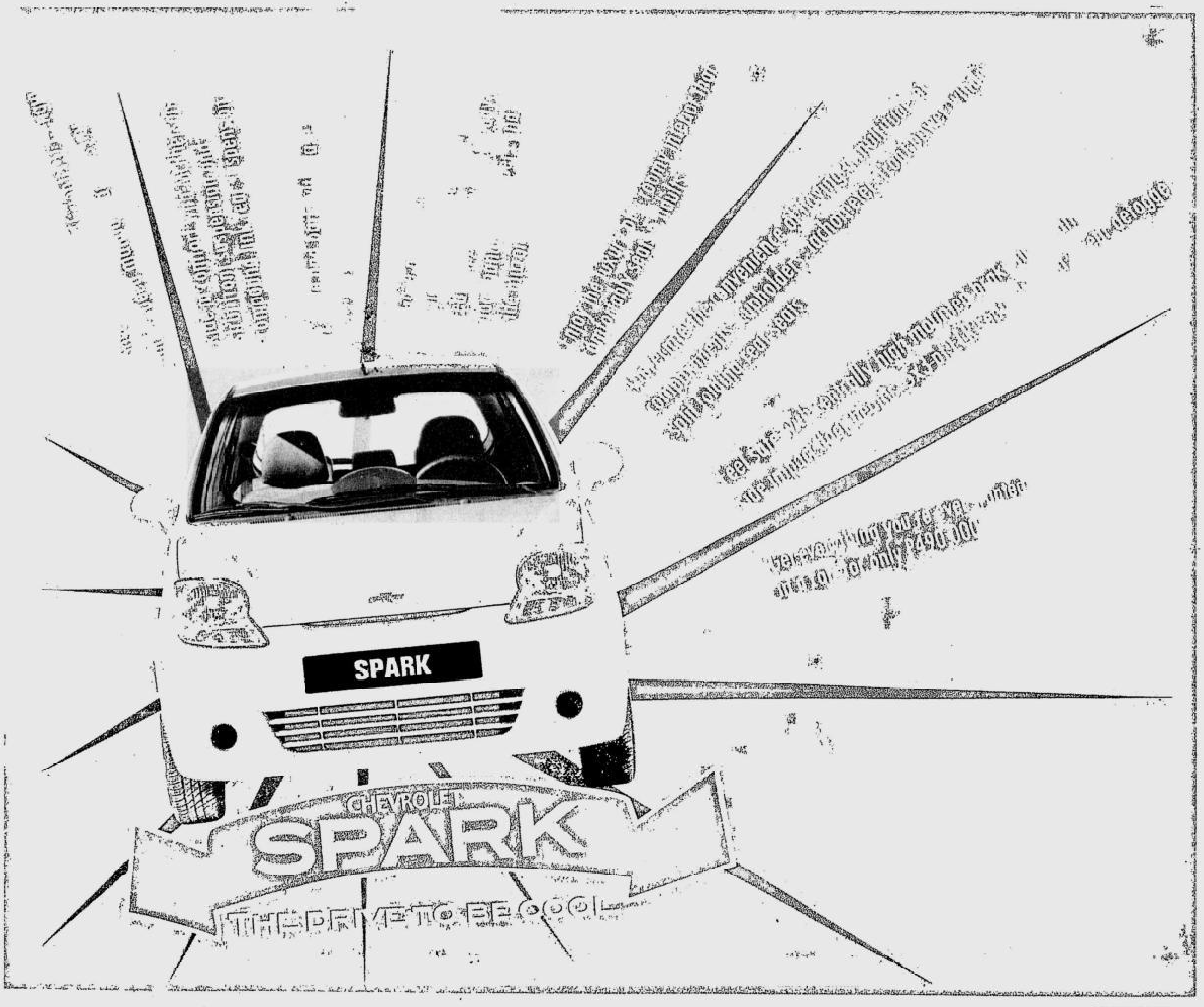
The sides of the Chevrolet Aveo Sedan feature flared wheel arches allowing it to achieve a more aggressive sporty look. Side view mirrors come in two tone colors and are larger than before, which gives better visibility and clearer view of traffic. The rear stands out with a triangular shaped tail lamp casing, which hides two round lamps and a rear fog light. The 3rd brake light is embedded on the rear window area, which achieves a neat and tidy appearance and avoids the usual protrusion problems of other antennae.

Large air vents comes in the innovative round designs, which allow you to rotate it 360 degrees for better air flow adjustability and optimal dispersion of cool air inside the vehicle.

Front seats can be adjusted forward and backwards and are also height adjustable. Compartments are designed into the sides of the seats for extra functionality and practicality.

The Aveo Sedan comes with top of the line safety features such as dual airbags, ABS, 3rd brake lamp and front and rear fog lamps.

The new Chevrolet Aveo is available in two models, a 5-speed manual transmission and a 4-speed automatic. Available colors are Sparking Tan, Black Sapphire, Citrus Green, Light Quartz Gray, Royal Gray and Sterling Silver Metallic.



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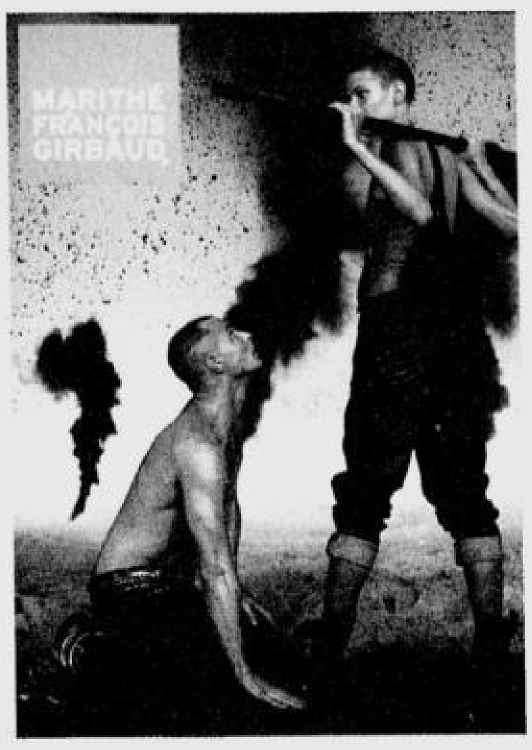

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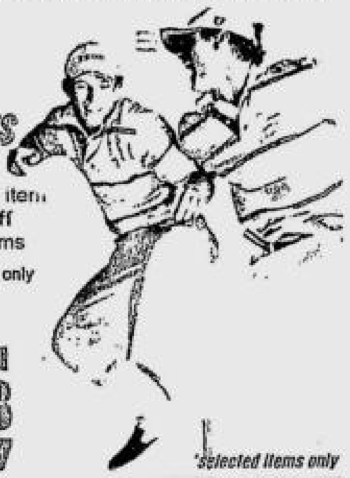

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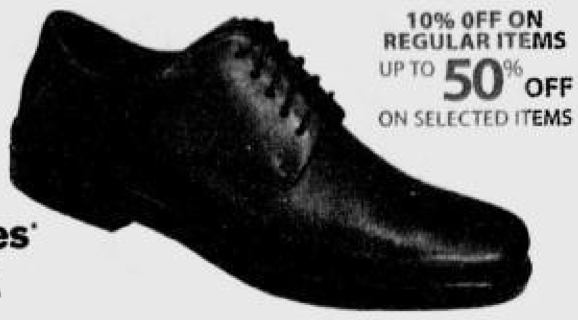

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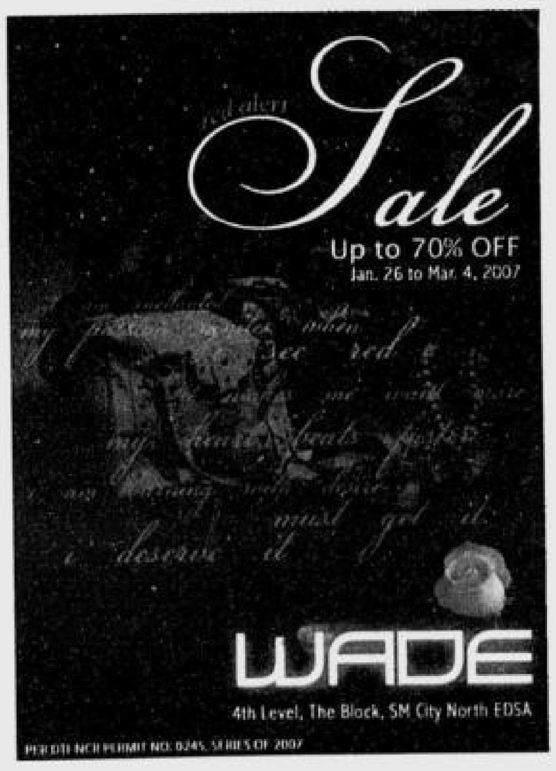

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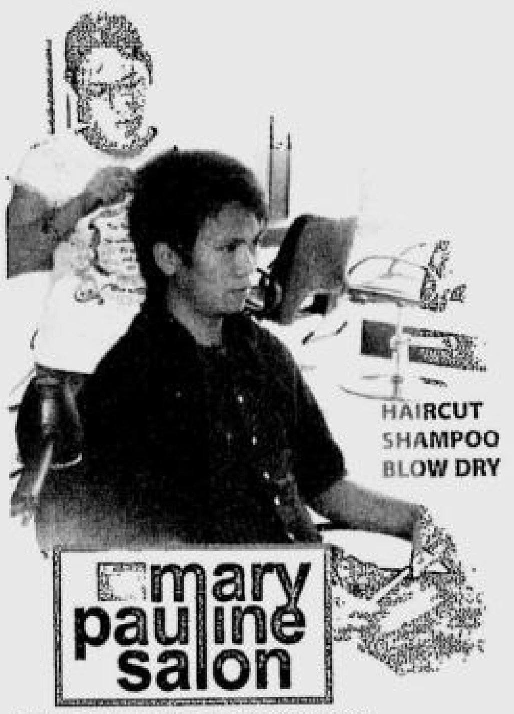

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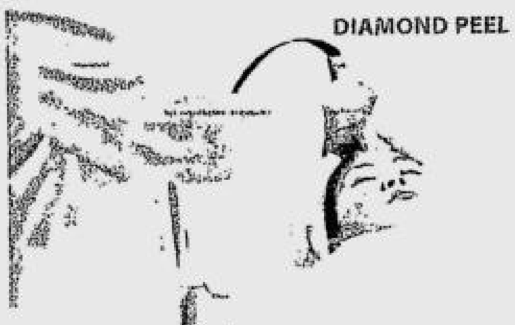

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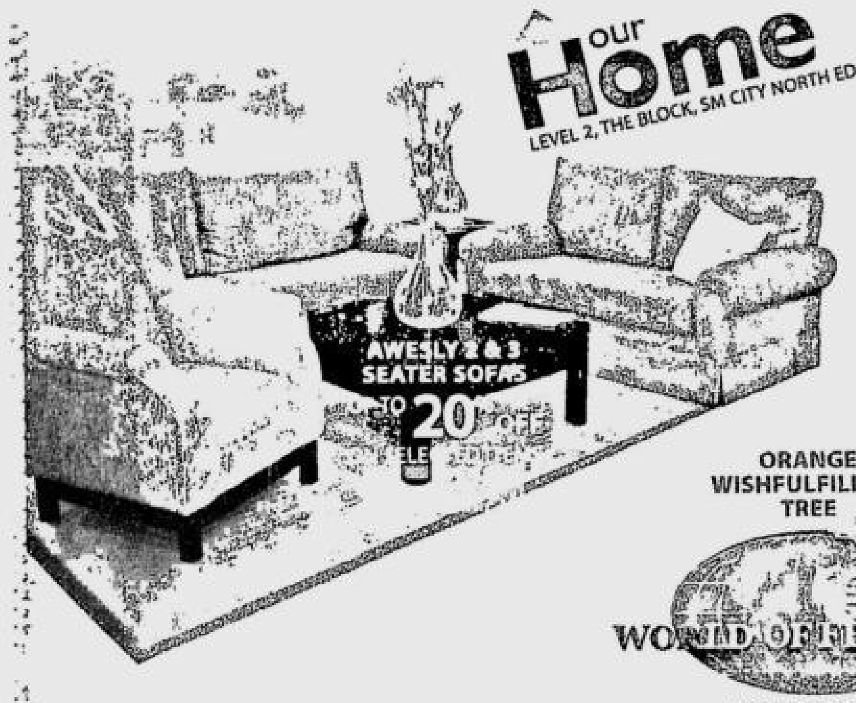

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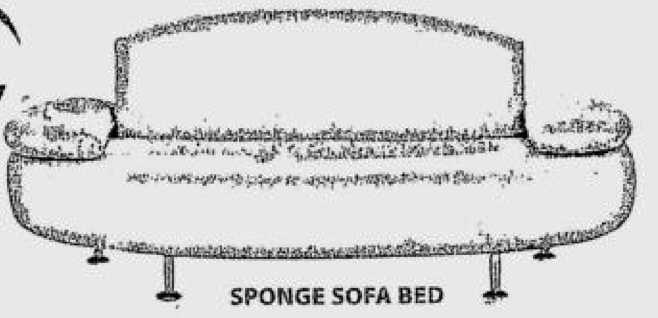

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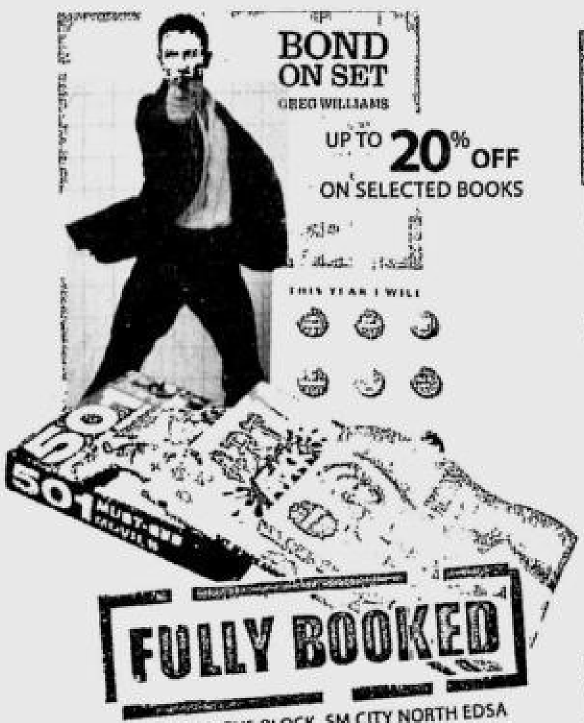

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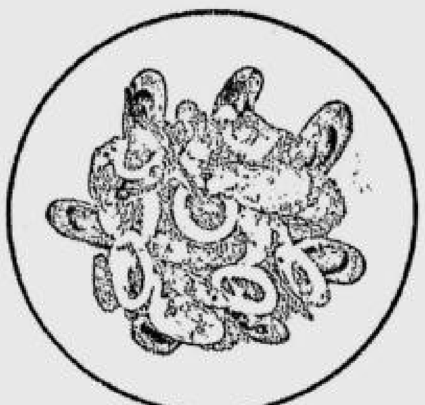

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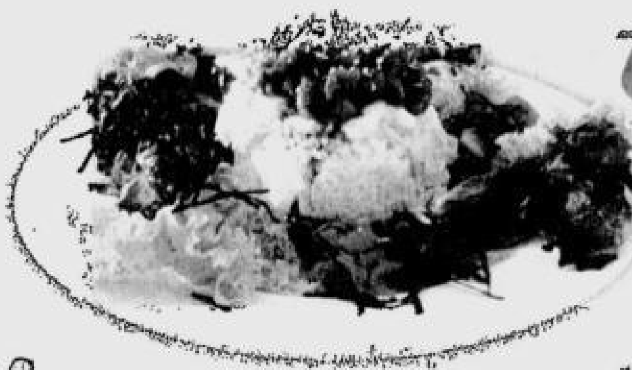

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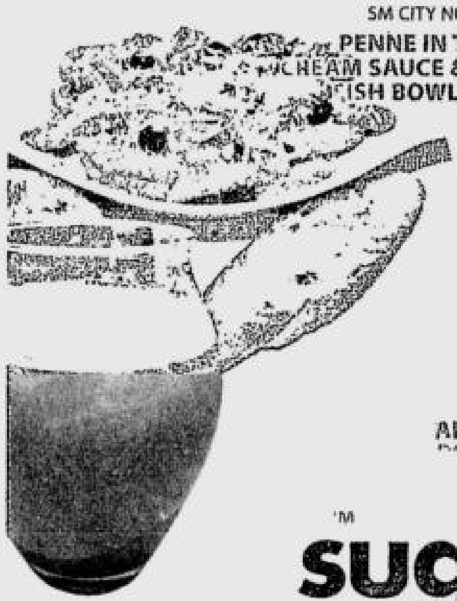

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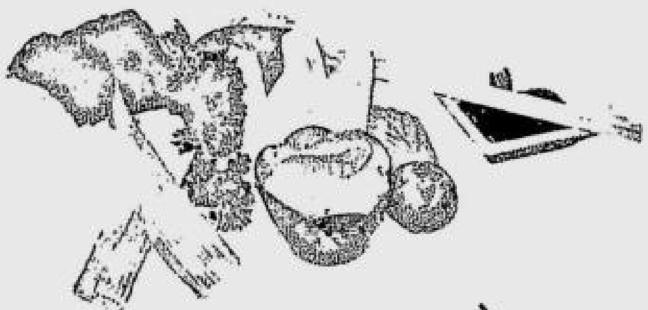

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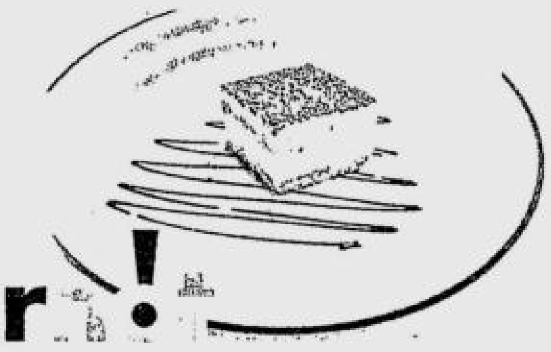

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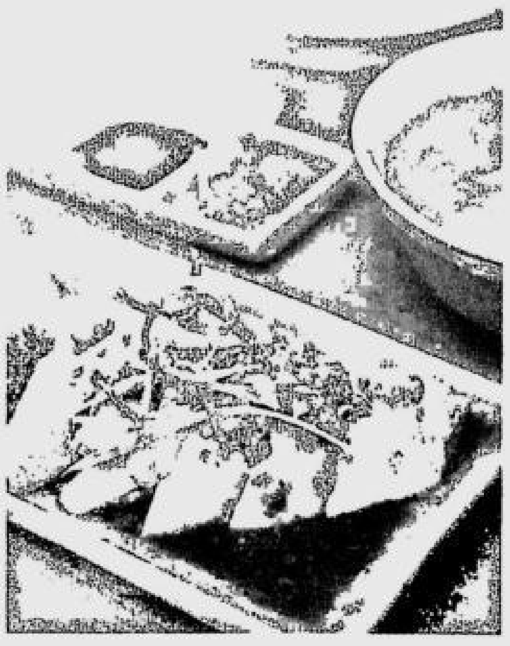
LEVEL 3, THE BLOCK, SM CITY NORTH EDSA
HAINANESE CHICKEN



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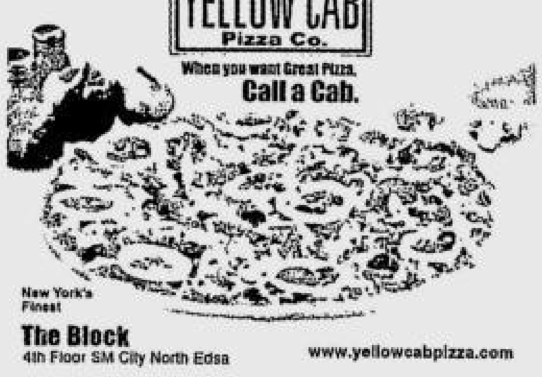

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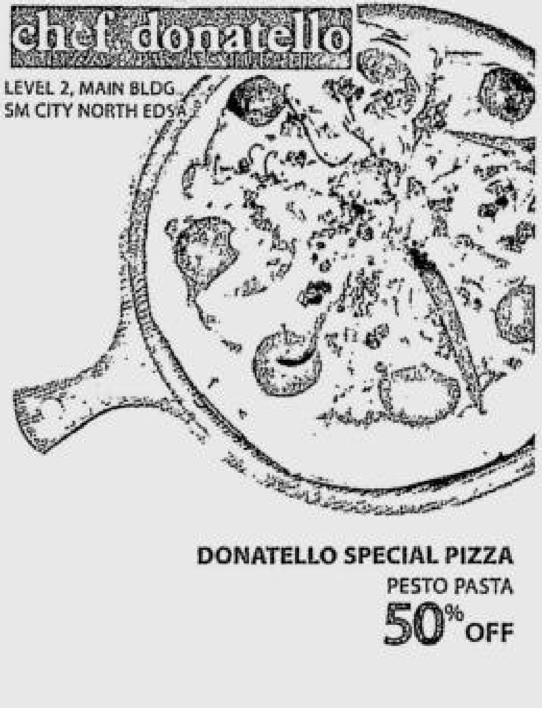
www.yellowcabpizza.com

FLAVOURS OF CHINA

LEVEL 3, THE BLOCK, SM CITY NORTH E

chef donatello
LEVEL 2, MAIN BLDG.
SM CITY NORTH EDSA



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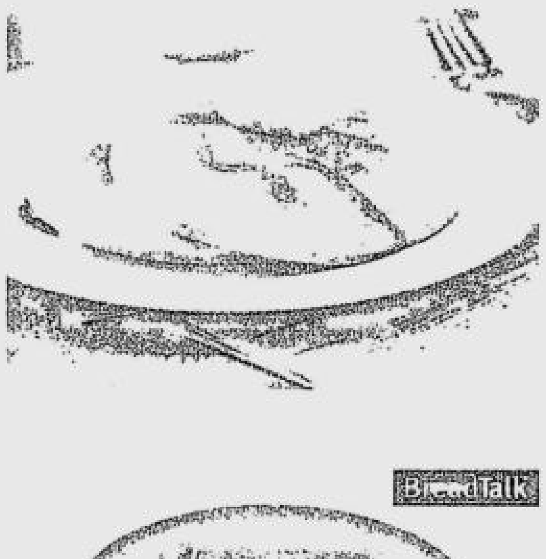
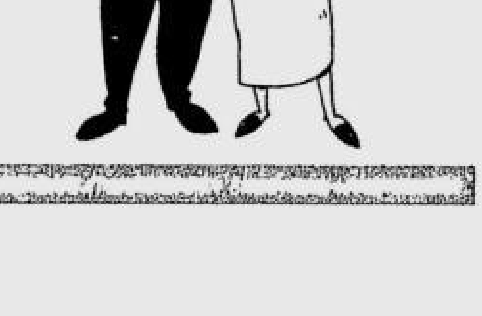
PESTO PASTA
50% OFF

PANCAKE HOUSE
GROUND FLOOR, THE BLOCK,
SM CITY NORTH EDSA



BreadTalk



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